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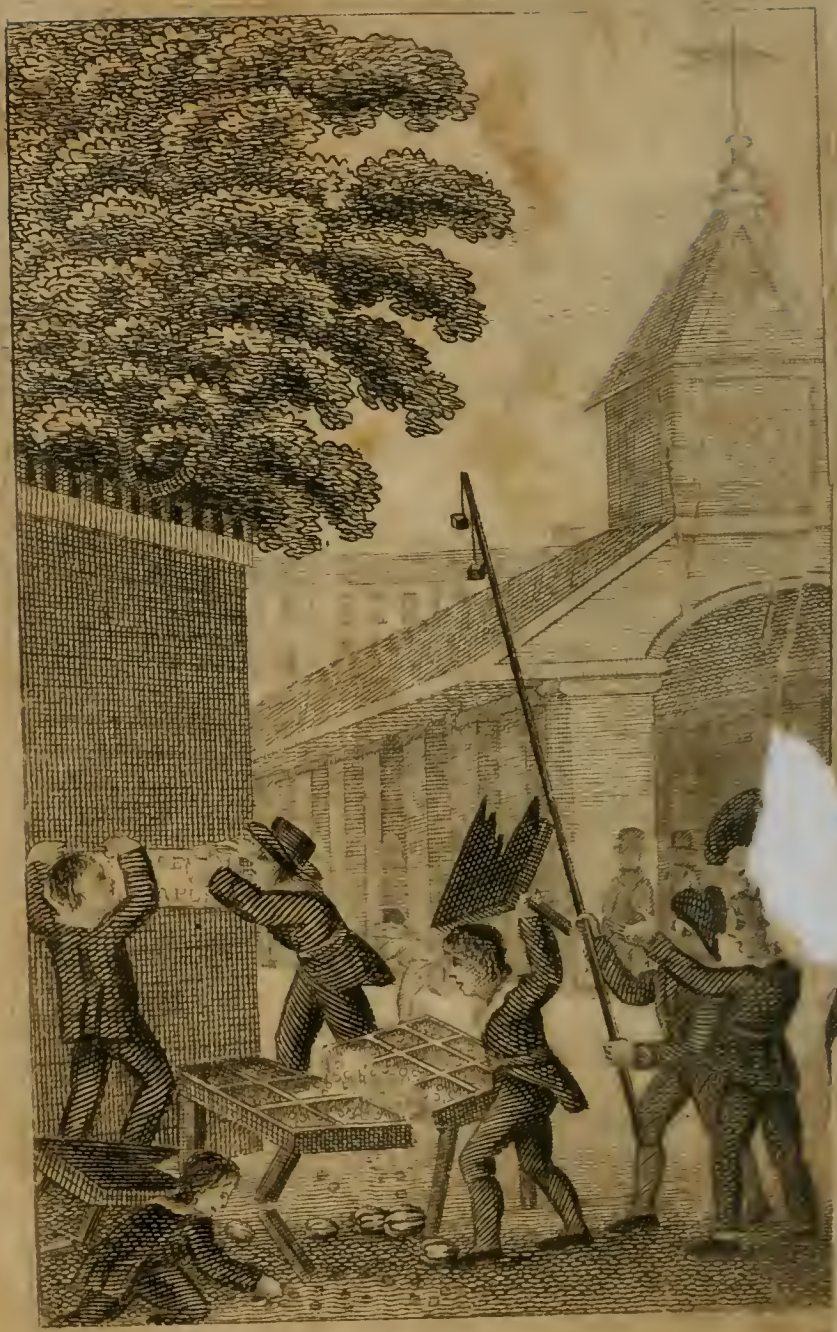

THE

PARENT'S ASSISTANT;

OR,

STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE BRACELETS.

IN a beautiful and retired part of England lived Mrs. Villars; a lady whose accurate understanding, benevolent heart, and steady temper, peculiarly fitted her for the most difficult, as well as most important of all occupations—the education of youth. This task she had undertaken; and twenty young persons were put under her care, with the perfect confidence of their parents. No young people could be happier; they were good and gay, emulous, but not envious of each other; for Mrs. Villars was impartially just; her praise they felt to be the reward of merit, and her blame they knew to be the necessary consequence of ill-conduct: to the one, therefore, they patiently submitted, and in the other consciously rejoiced. They rose with fresh cheerfulness in the morning, eager to pursue their various occupations; they returned in the evening with renewed ardor to their amusements, and retired to

rest satisfied with themselves, and pleased with each other.

Nothing so much contributed to preserve a spirit of emulation in this little society as a small honorary distinction, given annually, as the prize of successful application. The prize this year was peculiarly dear to each individual, as it was the picture of a friend whom they all dearly loved—it was the picture of Mrs. Villars in a small bracelet. It wanted neither gold, pearls, nor precious stones, to give it value.

The two foremost candidates for this prize were Cecilia and Leonora. Cecilia was the most intimate friend of Leonora, but Leonora was only the favourite companion of Cecilia.

Cecilia was of an active, ambitious, enterprising disposition; more eager in the pursuit, than happy in the enjoyment of her wishes. Leonora was of a contented, unaspiring, temperate character; not easily roused to action, but indefatigable when once excited. Leonora was proud, Cecilia was vain: her vanity made her more dependent upon the approbation of others, and therefore more anxious to please than Leonora; but that very vanity made her, at the same time, more apt to offend: in short,

Leonora was the most anxious to avoid what was wrong, Cecilia the most ambitious to do what was right. Few of their companions loved, but many were led by Cecilia, for she was often successful; many loved Leonora, but none were ever governed by her, for she was too indolent to govern.

On the first day of May, about six o'clock in the evening, a great bell rang to summon this little society into a hall, where the prize was to be decided. A number of small tables were placed in a circle in the middle of the hall; seats for the young competitors were raised one above another, in a semicircle, some yards distant from the table; and the judges' chairs, under canopies of lilacs and laburnums, forming another semicircle, closed the amphitheatre. Every one put their writings, their drawings, their works of various kinds, upon the tables appropriated for each. How unsteady were the last steps to these tables! How each little hand trembled as it laid down its claims. Till this moment every one thought herself secure of success, but now each felt an equal certainty of being excelled; and the heart which a few minutes before exulted with hope, now palpitated with fear.

The works were examined, the preference adjudged; and the prize was declared to be the happy Cecilia's. Mrs. Villars came forward, smiling, with the bracelet in her hand: Cecilia was behind her companions, on the highest row; all the others gave way, and she was on the floor in an instant. Mrs. Villars clasped the bracelet on her arm; the clasp was heard through the whole hall, and an universal smile of congratulation followed. Mrs. Villars kissed Cecilia's little hand; and 'now,' said she, 'go and rejoice with your companions; the remainder of the day is yours.'

Oh! you whose hearts are elated with success, whose bosoms beat high with joy, in the moment of triumph, command yourselves: let that triumph be moderate, that it may be lasting. Consider, that though you are good, you may be better; and though wise, you may be weak.

As soon as Mrs. Villars had given her the bracelet, all Cecilia's little companions crowded round her, and they all left the hall in an instant; she was full of spirits and vanity, she ran on: running down the flight of steps which led to the garden, in her violent haste, Cecilia threw down the little

Louisa. Louisa had a china mandarin in her hand, which her mother had sent her that very morning; it was all broken to pieces by her fall.

'Oh! my mandarin!' cried Louisa, bursting into tears. The crowd behind Cecilia suddenly stopped: Louisa sat on the lowest step, fixing her eyes upon the broken pieces; then turning round, she hid her face in her hands upon the step above her. In turning, Louisa threw down the remains of the mandarin; the head, which she had placed in the socket, fell from the shoulders, and rolled bounding along the gravel walk. Cecilia pointed to the head, and to the socket, and burst out a laughing; the crowd behind laughed too. At any other time they would have been more inclined to cry with Louisa, but Cecilia had just been successful, and sympathy with the victorious often makes us forget justice. Leonora, however, preserved her usual consistency. 'Poor Louisa!' said she, looking first at her, and then reproachfully at Cecilia. Cecilia turned sharply round, colouring, half with shame and half with vexation; 'I could not help it, Leonora,' said she.

'But you could have helped laughing, Cecilia.'

'I didn't laugh at Louisa; and I surely may laugh, for it does nobody any harm.'

'I am sure, however,' replied Leonora, 'I should not have laughed if I had——'

'No to be sure you wouldn't, because Louisa is your favourite; I can buy her another mandarin the next time that the old pedlar comes to the door, if that's all. I *can* do no more—*can* I?' said she turning round to her companions.

'No to be sure,' said they, 'that's all fair.'

Cecilia looked triumphantly at Leonora: Leonora let go her hand; she ran on, and the crowd followed. When she got to the end of the garden, she turned round to see if Leonora had followed her too; but was vexed to see her still sitting on the steps with Louisa. 'I'm sure I can do no more than buy her another! *Can* I?' said she again, appealing to her companions.

'No, to be sure,' said they, eager to begin their plays.

How many did they begin and leave off, before Cecilia could be satisfied with any: her thoughts were discomposed, and her mind was running upon something else; no wonder then, that she did not play with her

usual address. She grew still more impatient; she threw down the nine-pins. 'Come, let us play at something else—at threading the needle,' said she, holding out her hand. They all yielded to the hand which wore the bracelet. But Cecilia, dissatisfied with herself, was discontented with every body else: her tone grew more and more peremptory. One was too rude, another too stiff; one too slow, another too quick; in short, every thing went wrong, and every body was tired of her humours.

The triumph of *success* is absolute but short. Cecilia's companions at length recollected, that though she had embroidered a tulip and painted a peach better than they, yet that they could play as well, and keep their tempers better: she was thrown out. Walking towards the house, in a peevish mood, she met Leonora: she passed on.

'Cecilia!' cried Leonora.

'Well, what do you want with me?'

'Are we friends?'

'You know best.'

'We are; if you will let me tell Louisa, that you are sorry——'

Cecilia, interrupting her—'Oh! pray let me hear no more about Louisa!'

'What! not confess that you were in the wrong! Oh, Cecilia! I had a better opinion of you.'

'Your opinion is of no consequence to me now; for you don't love me.'

'No, not when you are unjust, Cecilia.'

'Unjust! I am not unjust: and if I were, you are not my governess.'

'No, but am not I your friend?'

'I don't desire to have such a friend, who would quarrel with me for happening to throw down little Louisa; how could I tell that she had a mandarin in her hand? and when it was broken, could I do more than promise her another? Was that unjust?'

'But you know, Cecilia——'

'I *know*,' ironically, 'I know, Leonora, that you love Louisa better than you do me; that's the injustice!'

'If I did,' replied Leonora gravely, 'it would be no injustice, if she deserved it better.'

'How can you compare Louisa to me!' exclaimed Cecilia, indignantly.

Leonora made no answer, for she was really hurt at her friend's conduct; she walked on to join the rest of her companions. They were dancing in a round upon the

grass: Leonora declined dancing, but they prevailed upon her to sing for them; her voice was not so sprightly, but it was sweeter than usual. Who sung so sweetly as Leonora? or who danced so nimbly as Louisa?

Away she was flying, all spirits and gaiety, when Leonora's eyes, full of tears, caught hers: Louisa silently let go her companions' hands, and quitting the dance, ran up to Leonora to inquire what was the matter with her.

'Nothing,' replied she, 'that need interrupt you. Go, my dear; go and dance again.'

Louisa immediately ran away to her garden, and pulling off her little straw hat, she lined it with the freshest strawberry leaves; and was upon her knees before the strawberry bed when Cecilia came by. Cecilia was not disposed to be pleased with Louisa at that instant, for two reasons; because she was jealous of her, and because she had injured her. The injury, however, Louisa had already forgotten: perhaps, to tell things just as they were, she was not quite so much inclined to kiss Cecilia as she would have been before the fall of her mandarin,

but this was the utmost extent of her malice, if it can be called malice.

'What are you doing there, little one?' said Cecilia, in a sharp tone: 'are you eating your early strawberries here all alone?'

'No,' said Louisa, mysteriously; 'I am not eating them.'

'What are you doing with them? Can't you answer then? I'm not playing with you, child!'

'Oh! as to that, Cecilia, you know I need not answer you unless I choose it: not but what I would, if you would only ask me civilly, and if you would not call me *child*.'

'Why should not I call you child?'

'Because—because—I don't know: but I wish you would stand out of my light, Cecilia, for you are trampling upon all my strawberries.'

'I have not touched one, you covetous little creature!'

'Indeed, indeed, Cecilia, I am not covetous; I have not eaten one of them—they are all for your friend Leonora. See how unjust you are.'

'Unjust! that's a cant word you learned of my friend Leonora, as you call her, but she is not my friend now.'

'Not your friend now!' exclaimed Louisa, 'then I am sure you must have done something *very* naughty.'

'How!' said Cecilia, catching hold of her.

'Let me go; let me go!' cried Louisa, struggling; 'I won't give you one of my strawberries, for I don't like you at all!'

'You don't, don't you?' said Cecilia, provoked; and catching the hat from Louisa, she flung the strawberries over the hedge.

'Will nobody help me!' exclaimed Louisa, snatching her hat again, and running away with all her force.

'What have I done?' said Cecilia, recollecting herself; 'Louisa! Louisa!' She called very loud, but Louisa would not turn back; she was running to her companions.

They were still dancing hand in hand upon the grass, whilst Leonora, sitting in the middle, sang to them.

'Stop! stop! and hear me!' cried Louisa, breaking through them; and rushing up to Leonora, she threw her hat at her feet, and panting for breath—'It was full—almost full of my own strawberries,' said she, 'the first I ever got out of my own garden. They should all have been for you, Leonora, but now I have not one left. They are

all gone!' said she, and she hid her face in Leonora's lap.

'Gone! gone where!' said every one at once running up to her.

'Cecilia! Cecilia!' said she sobbing.

'Cecilia,' repeated Leonora, 'what of Cecilia?'

'Yes, it was—it was.'

'Come along with me,' said Leonora, unwilling to have her friend exposed; 'come and I will get you some more strawberries.'

'Oh, I don't mind the strawberries indeed; but I wanted to have had the pleasure of giving them to you.'

Leonora took her up in her arms to carry her away, but it was too late.

'What, Cecilia! Cecilia, who won the prize! it could not surely be Cecilia!' whispered every busy tongue.

At this instant the bell summoned them in. 'There she is, there she is!' cried they, pointing to an arbor, where Cecilia was standing ashamed and alone; and as they passed her, some lifted up their hands and eyes with astonishment, others whispered and huddled mysteriously together, as if to avoid her: Leonora walked on her head a little higher than usual.

'Leonora!' said Cecilia, timorously, as she passed.

'Oh, Cecilia! who would have thought that you had a bad heart?'

Cecilia turned her head aside, and burst into tears.

'Oh no, indeed, she has not a bad heart!' cried Louisa, running up to her, and throwing her arms round her neck; 'She's very sorry! are not you, Cecilia? But don't cry any more, for I forgive you with all my heart; and I love you now, though I said I did not when I was in a passion.'

'Oh, you sweet tempered girl! how I love you,' said Cecilia, kissing her.

'Well then, if you do, come along with me, and dry your eyes, for they are so red!'

'Go, my dear, and I'll come presently.'

'Then I will keep a place for you next to me; but you must make haste, or you will have to come in when we have all sat down to supper, and then you will be so stared at! so don't stay now.'

Cecilia followed Louisa with her eyes, till she was out of sight. 'And is Louisa,' said she to herself, 'the only one who would stop to pity me? Mrs. Villars told me that this day should be mine; she little thought how it would end!' Saying these words,

Cecilia threw herself down upon the ground; her arm leaned upon a heap of turf which she had raised in the morning, and which, in the pride and gaiety of her heart she had called her throne.

At this instant, Mrs. Villars came out to enjoy the serenity of the evening, and passing by the arbor where Cecilia lay, she started; Cecilia rose hastily.

'Who is there?' said Mrs. Villars.

'It is I, madam.'

'And who is *I?*'

'Cecilia.'

'Why, what keeps you here, my dear—where are your companions? this is perhaps, one of the happiest days of your life.'

'God forbid, madam!' said Cecilia, hardly able to repress her tears.

'Why, my dear, what is the matter?'

Cecilia hesitated.

'Speak, my dear; you know that when I ask you to tell me any thing as your friend, I never punish you as your governess: therefore you need not be afraid to tell me what is the matter.'

'No madam, I am not afraid, but ashamed. You asked me why I was not with my companions; why, madam, because they have all left me, and——'

'And what, my dear?'

'And I see that they all dislike me, and yet I don't know why they should, for I take as much pains to please as any of them; all my masters seem satisfied with me, and you yourself, ma'am, were pleased this very morning to give me this bracelet; and I am sure you would not have given it to any one who did not deserve it.'

'Certainly not: you did deserve it for your application—for your successful application. The prize was for the most assiduous, not for the most amiable.'

'Then if it had been for the most amiable, it would not have been for me?'

Mrs. Villars, smiling,—'Why, what do you think yourself, Cecilia? you are better able to judge than I am; I can determine whether or no you apply to what I give you to learn; whether you attend to what I desire you to do, and avoid what I desire you not to do; I know that I like you as a pupil, but I cannot know that I should like you as a companion, unless I were your companion: therefore I must judge of what I should do, by seeing what others do in the same circumstances.'

'Oh, pray don't ma'am! for then you would not love me neither. And yet I think

you would love me ; for I hope that I am as ready to oblige, and as good-natured as—'

'Yes, Cecilia, I don't doubt but that you would be very good-natured to me, but I am afraid that I should not like you, unless you were good-tempered too.'

'But ma'am, by good-natured I mean good-tempered—it's all the same thing.'

'No, indeed, I understand by them two very different things : you are good-natured, Cecilia, for you are desirous to oblige, and serve your companions ; to gain them praise, and save them from blame ; to give them pleasure, and relieve them from pain : but Leonora is good-tempered, for she can bear with their foibles, and acknowledge her own ; without disputing about the right, she sometimes yields to those who are in the wrong : in short, her temper is perfectly good, for it can bear and forbear.'

'I wish that mine could!' said Cecilia, sighing.

'It may,' replied Mrs. Villars, 'but it is not wishes alone, which can improve us in any thing ; turn the same exertion and perseverance, which have won you the prize to-day, to this object, and you will meet with the same success ; perhaps not on the first, the second, or the third attempt, but

depend upon it that you will at last; every new effort, will weaken your bad habits, and strengthen your good ones. But you must not expect to succeed all at once, I repeat it to you; for habit must be counteracted by habit. It would be as extravagant in us to expect that all our faults could be destroyed by one punishment, were it ever so severe, as it was in the Roman emperor we were reading of a few days ago, to wish that all the heads of his enemies were upon one neck, that he might cut them off at one blow.'

Here Mrs. Villars took Cecilia by the hand, and they began to walk home. Such was the nature of Cecilia's mind that when any object was forcibly impressed on her imagination, it caused a temporary suspension of her reasoning faculties. Hope was too strong a stimulus for her spirits; and when fear did take possession of her mind, it was attended with total debility: her vanity was now as much mortified, as in the morning it had been elated. She walked on with Mrs. Villars in silence, until they came under the shade of the elm-tree walk, and then, fixing her eyes upon Mrs. Villars, she stopped short—'Do you think, madam,'

said she, with hesitation, 'do you think, madam, that I have a bad heart?'

'A bad heart, my dear! why what put that into your head?'

'Leonora said that I had, ma'am, and I felt ashamed when she said so.'

'But, my dear, how can Leonora tell whether your heart be good or bad? However, in the first place, tell me what you mean by a bad heart.'

'Indeed I do not know what is meant by it, ma'am; but it is something which every body hates.'

'And why do they hate it?'

'Because they think that it will hurt them, ma'am, I believe: and that those who have bad hearts, take delight in doing mischief; and that they never do any body any good but for their own ends.'

'Then the best definition which you can give me of a bad heart is, that it is some constant propensity to hurt others, and to do wrong for the sake of doing wrong.'

'Yes, ma'am, but that is not all neither; there is still something else meant; something which I cannot express—which, indeed, I never distinctly understood; but of which, therefore, I was the more afraid.'

'Well then, to begin with what you do understand, tell me, Cecilia, do you really think it possible to be wicked merely for the love of wickedness? No human being becomes wicked all at once; a man begins by doing wrong because it is, or because he thinks it for his interest; if he continue to do so, he must conquer his sense of shame, and lose his love of virtue. But how can you, Cecilia, who feel such a strong sense of shame, and such an eager desire to improve, imagine that you have a bad heart?'

'Indeed, madam, I never did, until every body told me so, and then I began to be frightened about it: this very evening, ma'am, when I was in a passion, I threw little Louisa's stawberries away; which, I am sure, I was very sorry for afterwards; and Leonora and every body cried out that I had a bad heart, but I am sure I was only in a passion.'

'Very likely. And when you are in a a passion, as you call it, Cecilia, you see that you are tempted to do harm to others: if they do not feel angry themselves, they do not sympathise with you; they do not perceive the motive which actuates you, and then they say that you have a bad heart. I

dare say, however, when your passion is over, and when you recollect yourself, you are very sorry for what you have done and said; are not you?'

'Yes, indeed, madam—very sorry.'

'Then make that sorrow of use to you, Cecilia, and fix it steadily in your thoughts, as you hope to be good and happy, that if you suffer yourself to yield to your passion upon every trifling occasion, anger and its consequences will become familiar to your mind; and, in the same proportion your sense of shame will be weakened, till, what you began with doing from sudden impulse, you will end with doing from habit and choice: and then you would indeed, according to our definition, have a bad heart.'

'Oh, madam! I hope—I am sure I never shall.'

'No, indeed, Cecilia; I do, indeed, believe that you never will; on the contrary, I think that you have a very good disposition; and what is of infinitely more consequence to you, an active desire of improvement: shew me that you have as much perseverance as you have candour, and I shall not despair of your becoming every thing that I could wish.'

Here Cecilia's countenance brightened, and she ran up the steps in almost as high spirits as she ran down them in the morning.

'Good night to you, Cecilia,' said Mrs. Villars, as she was crossing the hall.

'Good night to you, madam,' said Cecilia; and she ran up stairs to bed.

She could not go to sleep, but she lay awake reflecting upon the events of the preceding day, and forming resolutions for the future; at the same time considering that she had resolved, and resolved without effect, she wished to give her mind some more powerful motive: ambition she knew to be its most powerful incentive.

'Have I not,' said she to herself, 'already won the prize of application, and cannot the same application procure me a much higher prize? Mrs. Villars said, that if the prize had been promised to the most amiable, it would not have been given to me: perhaps it would not yesterday—perhaps it might not to-morrow; but that is no reason that I should despair of ever deserving it.'

In consequence of this reasoning, Cecilia formed a design of proposing to her companions, that they should give a prize, the first of the ensuing month (the first of June) to the most amiable. Mrs. Villars applauded

the scheme, and her companions adopted it with the greatest alacrity.

'Let the prize,' said they, 'be a bracelet of our own hair;' and instantly their shining scissors were produced, and each contributed a lock of their hair. They formed the most beautiful gradation of colours, from the palest auburn to the brightest black. Who was to have the honour of plaiting them was now the question.

Caroline begged that she might, as she could plait very neatly, she said.

Cecilia, however, was equally sure that she could do it much better; and a dispute would inevitably have ensued, if Cecilia, recollecting herself just as her colour rose to scarlet, had not yielded—yielded, with no very good grace indeed, but as well as could be expected for the first time. For it is habit which confers ease; and without ease, even in moral actions, there can be no grace.

The bracelet was plaited in the neatest manner by Caroline, finished round the edge with silver twist, and on it was worked, in the smallest silver letters, this motto, TO THE MOST AMIABLE. The moment it was completed, every body begged to try it on; it fastened with little silver clasps, and as it was made large enough for the eldest girls,

it was too large for the youngest; of this they bitterly complained, and unanimously entreated that it might be cut to fit them.

'How foolish!' exclaimed Cecilia; 'don't you perceive, that if any of you win it, you have nothing to do but to put the clasps a little further from the edge; but, if we get it, we can't make it larger?'

'Very true,' said they, 'but you need not to have called us foolish, Cecilia!'

It was by such hasty and unguarded expressions as these, that Cecilia offended: a slight difference in the manner makes a very material one in the effect; Cecilia lost more love by general petulance, than she could gain by the greatest particular exertions.

How far she succeeded in curing herself of this defect, how far she became deserving of the bracelet, and to whom the bracelet was given, shall be told in the History of the First of June.

CONTINUATION.

THE BRACELETS.

THE first of June was now arrived, and all the young competitors were in a state of the most anxious suspense. Leonora and Cecilia continued to be the foremost candidates; their quarrel had never been finally adjusted, and their different pretensions now retarded all thoughts of a reconciliation. Cecilia, though she was capable of acknowledging any of her faults in publick before all her companions, could not humble herself in private to Leonora: Leonora was her equal, they were her inferiors; and submission is much easier to a vain mind, where it appears to be voluntary, than when it is the necessary tribute to justice or candour. So strongly did Cecilia feel this truth, that she even delayed making any apology, or coming to any explanation with

Leonora, until success should once more give her the palm.

'If I win the bracelet to-day,' said she to herself, I will solicit the return of Leonora's friendship; it will be more valuable to me than even the bracelet; and at such a time, and asked in such a manner, she surely cannot refuse it to me. Animated with this hope of a double triumph, Cecilia canvassed with the most zealous activity: by constant attention and exertion she had considerably abated the violence of her temper, and changed the course of her habits. Her powers of pleasing were now excited, instead of her abilities to excel; and, if her talents appeared less brilliant, her character was acknowledged to be more amiable; so great an influence upon our manners and conduct have the objects of our ambition. Cecilia was now, if possible, more than ever desirous of doing what was right, but she had not yet acquired sufficient fear of doing wrong. This was the fundamental error of her mind: it arose in a great measure from her early education.

Her mother died when she was very young; and though her father had supplied her place in the best and kindest manner, he had insensibly infused into his daughter's

mind a portion of that enterprising, independent spirit, which he justly deemed essential to the character of her brother: this brother was some years older than Cecilia, but he had always been the favourite companion of her youth: what her father's precepts inculcated, his example enforced, and even Cecilia's virtues consequently became such as were more estimable in a man, than desirable in a female.

All small objects, and small errors, she had been taught to disregard as trifles; and her impatient disposition was perpetually leading her into more material faults; yet her candour in confessing these, she had been suffered to believe, was sufficient reparation and atonement.

Leonora, on the contrary, who had been educated by her mother in a manner more suited to her sex, had a character and virtues more peculiar to a female: her judgment had been early cultivated, and her good sense employed in the regulation of her conduct; she had been habituated to that restraint, which, as a woman, she was to expect in life, and early accustomed to yield; compliance in her seemed natural and graceful.

Yet, notwithstanding the gentleness of her temper, she was in reality more independent than Cecilia; she had more reliance upon her own judgment, and more satisfaction in her own approbation: though far from insensible to praise, she was not liable to be misled by the indiscriminate love of admiration: the uniform kindness of her manner, the consistency and equality of her character, had fixed the esteem and passive love of her companions.

By passive love we mean that species of affection, which makes us unwilling to offend, rather than anxious to oblige; which is more a habit than an emotion of the mind. For Cecilia, her companions felt active love, for she was active in shewing her love to them.

Active love arises spontaneously in the mind, after feeling particular instances of kindness, without reflection on the past conduct or general character; it exceeds the merits of its object, and is connected with a feeling of generosity, rather than with a sense of justice.

Without determining which species of love is the most flattering to others, we can easily decide which is the most agreeable

feeling to our own minds; we give our hearts more credit for being generous than for being just; and we feel more self-complacency when we give our love voluntarily, than when we yield it as a tribute which we cannot withhold. Though Cecilia's companions might not know all this in theory, they proved it in practice; for they loved her in a much higher proportion to her merits, than they loved Leonora.

Each of the young judges were to signify their choice, by putting a red or a white shell into a vase prepared for the purpose. Cecilia's colour was red, Leonora's white. In the morning nothing was to be seen but these shells, nothing talked of but the long expected event of the evening. Cecilia, following Leonora's example, had made it a point of honour not to enquire of any individual her vote, previously to their final determination.

They were both sitting together in Louisa's room: Louisa was recovering from the measles: every one during her illness had been desirous of attending her; but Leonora and Cecilia were the only two that were permitted to see her, as they alone had had the distemper. They were both assiduous in their care of Louisa; but Leonora's want of exertion to overcome any disagreeable

feelings of sensibility, often deprived her of presence of mind, and prevented her from being so constantly useful as Cecilia. Cecilia, on the contrary, often made too much noise and bustle with her officious assistance, and was too anxious to invent amusements, and procure comforts for Louisa, without perceiving, that illness takes away the power of enjoying them.

As she was sitting in the window in the morning, exerting herself to entertain Louisa, she heard the voice of an old pedlar, who often used to come to the house. Down stairs she ran immediately to ask Mrs. Villars's permission to bring him into the hall.

Mrs. Villars consented, and away Cecilia ran to proclaim the news to her companions; then first returning into the hall, she found the pedlar just unbuckling his box, and taking it off his shoulders. 'What would you be pleased to want, miss,' said he, 'I've all kinds of tweezer-cases, rings, and lockets of all sorts,' continued he, opening all the glittering drawers successively.

'Oh!' said Cecilia, shutting the drawer of lockets which tempted her most, 'these are not the things which I want; have you any china figures, any mandarins?'

'Alack-a-day, miss, I had a great stock of that same china ware, but now I'm quite out of them kind of things; but I believe,' said he, rummaging in one of the deepest drawers, 'I believe I have one left, and here it is.'

'Oh that is the very thing! what's its price?'

'Only three shillings, ma'am.' Cecilia paid the money, and was just going to carry off the mandarin, when the pedlar took out of his great coat pocket a neat mahogany case: it was about a foot long, and fastened at each end by two little clasps; it had, besides, a small locket in the middle.

'What is that?' said Cecilia, eagerly.

'It's only a china figure, miss, which I am going to carry to an elderly lady, who lives nigh hand, and who is mighty fond of such things.'

'Could you let me look at it?'

'And welcome, miss,' said he, and opened the case.

'Oh goodness! how beautiful!' exclaimed Cecilia.

It was a figure of Flora, crowned with roses, and carrying a basket of flowers in her hand. Cecilia contemplated it with delight.

'How I should like to give this to Louisa,' said she to herself; and at last, breaking silence, 'did you promise it to the old lady?'

'Oh no miss; I didn't promise it, she never saw it; and if so be that you'd like to take it, I'd make no more words about it.'

'And how much does it cost?'

'Why, miss, as to that, I'll let you have it for half-a-guinea.'

Cecilia immediately produced the box in which she kept her treasure, and, emptying it upon the table, she began to count the shillings: alas! there were but six shillings. 'How provoking!' said she, 'then I can't have it; where's the mandarin? Oh I have it,' said she, taking it up, and looking at it with the utmost disgust; 'is this the same that I had before?'

'Yes, miss, the very same,' replied the pedlar, who, during this time, had been examining the little box out of which Cecilia had taken her money: it was of silver.

'Why ma'am,' said he, 'since you've taken such a fancy to the piece, if you've a mind to make up the remainder of the money, I will take this here little box, if you care to part with it.'

Now this box was a keep-sake from Leonora to Cecilia. 'No,' said Cecilia hastily,

blushing a little, and stretching out her hand to receive it.

'Oh, miss!' said he, returning it carelessly, 'I hope's there's no offence; I meant but to serve you, that's all; such a rare piece of china-work has no cause to go a begging;' added he, putting the Flora deliberately into the case; then turning the key with a jerk he let it drop into his pocket, and lifting up his box by the leather straps, he was preparing to depart.

'Oh, stay one minute!' said Cecilia, in whose mind there had passed a very warm conflict during the pedlar's harangue. 'Louisa would so like this Flora,' said she, arguing with herself; 'besides, it would be so generous in me to give it to her instead of that ugly mandarin; that would be doing only common justice, for I promised it to her, and she expects it. Though, when I come to look at this mandarin it is not even so good as her's was: the gilding is all rubbed off, so that I absolutely must buy this for her. Oh yes, I will, and she will be so delighted! and then every body will say it is the prettiest thing they ever saw, and the broken mandarin will be forgotten for ever.'

Here Cecilia's hand moved, and she was just going to decide: 'Oh! but stop,' said

she to herself, 'consider Leonora gave me this box, and it is a keepsake; however, now we have quarrelled, and I dare say that she would not mind my parting with it: I'm sure that I should not care, if she was to give away my keepsake the smelling bottle, or the ring, which I gave her; so what does it signify; besides, is it not my own, and have I not a right to do what I please with it?'

At this dangerous instant for Cecilia, a party of her companions, opened the door; she knew that they came as purchasers, and she dreaded her Flora's becoming the prize of some higher bidder. 'Here,' said she, hastily putting the box into the pedlar's hand, without looking at it; 'take it, and give me the Flora.' Her hand trembled, though she snatched it impatiently; she ran by, without seeming to mind any of her companions—she almost wished to turn back.

Let those who are tempted to do wrong by the hopes of future gratification, or the prospect of certain concealment and impunity, remember, that unless they are totally depraved, they bear in their own hearts a monitor, who will prevent their enjoying what they have ill obtained.

In vain Cecilia ran to the rest of her companions, to display her present, in hopes that

the applause of others would restore her own self-complacency; in vain she saw the Flora pass in due pomp from hand to hand, each vying with the other in extolling the beauty of the gift, and the generosity of the giver. Cecilia was still displeased with herself, with them, and even with their praise; from Louisa's gratitude, however, she yet expected much pleasure, and immediately she ran up stairs to her room.

In the mean time Leonora had gone into the hall to buy a bodkin; she had just broken hers. In giving her change, the pedlar took out of his pocket, with some halfpence, the very box which Cecilia had sold to him. Leonora did not in the least suspect the truth, for her mind was above suspicion; and besides, she had the utmost confidence in Cecilia. 'I should like to have that box,' said she, 'for it is like one of which I was very fond.'

The pedlar named the price, and Leonora took the box: she intended to give it to little Louisa.

On going to her room she found her asleep, and she sat down softly by her bedside. Louisa opened her eyes.

'I hope I didn't disturb you,' said Leonora.

'Oh no; I did'nt hear you come in; but what have you got there?'

'It is only a little box; would you like to have it? I bought it on purpose for you, as I thought perhaps it would please you; because it's like that which I gave Cecilia.'

'Oh yes! that out of which she used to give me Barbary drops: I am very much obliged to you; I always thought *that* exceedingly pretty, and this, indeed, is as like it as possible. I can't unscrew it; will you try?'

Leonora unscrewed it.

'Goodness!' exclaimed Louisa, 'this must be Cecilia's box; look, don't you see a great L at the bottom of it?'

Leonora's colour changed; 'yes,' she replied calmly, 'I see that, but it is no proof that it is Cecilia's; you know that I bought this box just now of the pedlar.'

'That may be,' said Louisa; 'but I remember scratching that L with my own needle, and Cecilia scolded me for it too; do go and ask her if she has lost her box—do,' repeated Louisa, pulling her by the ruffle, as she did not seem to listen.

Leonora indeed did not hear, for she was lost in thought; she was comparing circumstances, which had before escaped her

attention: she recollected, that Cecilia had passed her as she came into the hall, without seeming to see her, but had blushed as she passed. She remembered that the pedlar appeared unwilling to part with the box, and was going to put it again into his pocket with the halfpence: 'and why should he keep it in his pocket, and not shew it with his other things?' Combining all these circumstances, Leonora had no longer any doubt of the truth; for though she had honourable confidence in her friends, she had too much penetration to be implicitly credulous. 'Louisa;' she began, but at this instant she heard a step, which, by its quickness, she knew to be Cecilia's, coming along the passage. 'If you love me, Louisa,' said Leonora, 'say nothing about the box.'

'Nay, but why not? I dare say she has lost it.'

'No, my dear, I'm afraid she has not.' Louisa looked surprised.

'But I have reasons for desiring you not to say any thing about it.'

'Well then, I won't, indeed.'

Cecilia opened the door, came forward smiling, as if secure of a good reception, and, taking the Flora out of the case, she placed it on the mantle-piece, opposite to

Louisa's bed. 'Dear, how beautiful,' cried Louisa, starting up.

'Yes,' said Cecilia, 'and guess who it's for?'

'For me, perhaps!' said the ingenuous Louisa.

'Yes, take it, and keep it for my sake: you know that I broke your mandarin.'

'Oh! but this is a great deal prettier and larger than that.'

'Yes, I know it is; and I meant that it should be so; I should only have done what I was bound to do, if I had only given you a mandarin.'

'Well and that would have been enough, surely; but what a beautiful crown of roses! and then that basket of flowers! they almost look as if I could smell them. Dear Cecilia! I'm very much obliged to you, but I won't take it by way of payment for the mandarin you broke; for I'm sure you could not help that; and, besides, I should have broken it myself by this time. You shall give it to me entirely, and I'll keep it as long as I live, as your keepsake.'

Louisa stopped short and coloured. The word keepsake recalled the box to her mind, and all the train of ideas which the Flora had banished. 'But,' said she, looking up

wishfully in Cecilia's face, and holding the Flora doubtfully, 'did you—'

Leonora, who was just quitting the room, turned her head back, and gave Louisa a look, which silenced her.

Cecilia was so infatuated with her vanity, that she neither perceived Leonora's sign, nor Louisa's confusion, but continued shewing off her present, by placing it in various situations, till at length she put it into the case, and laying it down with an affected carelessness upon the bed, 'I must go now, Louisa. Good bye,' said she, running up, and kissing her; 'but I'll come again presently'—then clapping the door after her, she went.

But, as soon as the fermentation of her spirits subsided, the sense of shame, which had been scarcely felt when mixed with so many other sensations, rose uppermost in her mind. 'What!' said she to herself, 'is it possible that I have sold what I promised to keep for ever? and what Leonora gave me? and I have concealed it too, and have been making a parade of my generosity. Oh! what would Leonora, what would Louisa, what would every body think of me, if the truth were known?

Humiliated and grieved by these reflections, Cecilia began to search in her own mind for some consoling idea. She began to compare her conduct with the conduct of others of her own age; and at length, fixing her comparison upon her brother George, as the companion of whom, from her infancy, she had been habitually the most emulous, she recollected, that an almost similar circumstance had once happened to him, and that he had not only escaped disgrace, but had acquired glory by an intrepid confession of his fault. Her father's words to her brother, on the occasion, she also perfectly recollected.

'Come to me, George,' he said, holding out his hand, 'you are a generous, brave boy: they who dare to confess their faults will make great and good men.'

These were his words; but Cecilia, in repeating them to herself, forgot to lay that emphasis on the word *men*, which would have placed it in contradistinction to the word women. She willingly believed, that the observation extended equally to both sexes, and flattered herself, that she should exceed her brother in merit, if she owned a fault, which she thought that it would be so

much more difficult to confess. 'Yes, but,' said she, stopping herself, 'how can I confess it? This very evening, in a few hours, the prize will be decided; Leonora or I shall win it: I have now as good a chance as Leonora, perhaps a better; and must I give up all my hopes? all that I have been labouring for this month past? Oh I never can;—if it were but to-morrow, or yesterday, or any day but this, I would not hesitate; but now I am almost certain of the prize, and if I win it—well, why then I will—I think, I will tell all—yes I will; I am determined,' said Cecilia.

Here, a bell summoned them to dinner; Leonora sat opposite to her, and she was not a little surprised, to see Cecilia look so gay and unconstrained. 'Surely,' said she to herself, 'if Cecilia, had done this, that I suspect, she would not, she could not look as she does.' But Leonora little knew the cause of her gaiety; Cecilia was never in higher spirits, or better pleased with herself, than when she had resolved upon a sacrifice or a confession.

'Must not the bracelet, this evening be given to the most amiable? whose then will it be?' All eyes glanced first at Cecilia, and then at Leonora. Cecilia smiled; Leonora

blushed. 'I see that it is not yet decided,' said Mrs. Villars; and immediately they ran up stairs, amidst confused whisperings.

Cecilia's voice could be distinguished far above the rest. 'How can she be so happy?' said Leonora to herself; 'Oh Cecilia, there was a time, when you could not have neglected me so! when we were always together, the best of friends and companions; our wishes, tastes, and pleasures the same! Surely she did once love me,' said Leonora; 'but now she is quite changed, she has even sold my keepsake; and she would rather win a bracelet of hair from girls whom she did not always think so much superior to Leonora, than have my esteem, my confidence, and my friendship, for her whole life: yes, for her whole life, for I am sure she will be an amiable woman. Oh! that this bracelet had never been thought of, or, that I were certain of her winning it; for I am sure that I do not wish to win it from her: I would rather, a thousand times rather, that we were as we used to be, than have all the glory in the world: and how pleasing Cecilia can be when she wishes to please! how candid she is! how much she can improve herself! let me be just, though she has offended me: she is wonderfully improved within

this last month; for one fault, and *that* against myself, should I forget all her merits?'

As Leonora said these last words, she could but just hear the voices of her companions; they had left her alone in the gallery; she knocked softly at Louisa's door—'Come in,' said Louisa, 'I'm not asleep; oh,' said she, starting up with the Flora in her hand, the instant that the door was opened, 'I'm so glad you are come, Leonora, for I did so long to hear what you were all making such a noise about; have you forgot that the bracelet——'

'O yes! is this the evening?'

'Well, here's my white shell for you, I've kept it in my pocket this fortnight; and though Cecilia did give me this Flora, I still love you a great deal better.'

'I thank you, Louisa,' said Leonora, gratefully, 'I will take your shell, and I shall value it as long as I live; but here is a red one, and if you wish to shew me that you love me, you will give this to Cecilia; I know that she is particularly anxious for your preference, and I am sure that she deserves it.'

'Yes, if I could, I would choose both of you; but you know I can only choose which I like the best.'

'If you mean, my dear Louisa,' said Leonora, 'that you like me the best, I am very much obliged to you; for indeed, I wish you to love me; but it is enough for me to know it in private; I should not feel the least more pleasure at hearing it in publick, or in having it made known to all my companions, especially at the time when it would give poor Cecilia a great deal of pain.'

'But why should it give her pain? I don't like her for being jealous of you.'

'Nay, Louisa, surely you don't think Cecilia jealous; she only tries to excel, and to please; she is more anxious to succeed than I am, it is true, because she has a great deal more activity, and perhaps more ambition; and it would really mortify her to lose this prize: you know that she proposed it herself, it has been her object for this month past, and I am sure she has taken great pains to obtain it.'

'But, dear Leonora, why should you lose it?'

'Indeed, my dear, it would be no loss to me; and, if it were, I would willingly suffer it for Cecilia; for, though we seem not to be such good friends as we used to be, I love her very much, and she will love me

again, I'm sure she will; when she no longer fears me as a rival, she will again love me as a friend.'

Here Leonora heard a number of her companions running along the gallery. They all knocked hastily at the door, calling 'Leonora! Leonora! will you never come? Cecilia has been with us this half hour.'

Leonora smiled. 'Well, Louisa,' said she, smiling, 'will you promise me?'

'Oh, I'm sure, by the way they speak to you, that they won't give you the prize!' said the little Louisa; and the tears started into her eyes.

'They love me, though, for all that: and as for the prize, you know whom I wish to have it.'

'Leonora! Leonora!' called her impatient companions; 'don't you hear us? what are you about?'

'Oh, she never will take any trouble about any thing,' said one of the party, 'let's go away.'

'Oh go! go! make haste,' cried Louisa; 'don't stay, they are so angry; I will, I will, indeed!'

'Remember, then, that you have promised me,' said Leonora, and she left the room. During all this time Cecilia had

been in the garden with her companions. The ambition which she had felt to win the first prize, the prize of superior talents, and superior application, was not to be compared to the absolute anxiety which she now expressed, to win this simple testimony of the love and approbation of her equals and rivals.

To employ her exuberant activity, she had been dragging branches of lilacs and laburnums, roses, and sweet briar, to ornament the bower in which her fate was to be decided. It was excessively hot, but her mind was engaged, and she was indefatigable. She stood still, at last, to admire her works; her companions all joined in loud applause; they were not a little prejudiced in her favour, by the great eagerness which she expressed to win their prize, and by the great importance which she seemed to affix to the preference of each individual. At last, 'where is Leonora?' cried one of them, and immediately, as we have seen, they ran to call her.

Cecilia was left alone; overcome with heat, and too violent exertion, she had hardly strength to support herself; each moment appeared to her intolerably long: she was in a state of the utmost suspense, and all her courage failed her; even hope forsook her,

and hope is a cordial which leaves the mind depressed and enfeebled. 'The time is now come,' said Cecilia, 'in a few moments all will be decided. In a few moments! goodness! how much do I hazard! If I should not win the prize, how shall I confess what I have done? How shall I beg Leonora to forgive me? I who hoped to restore my friendship to her as an honour! They are gone to see for her—the moment she appears I shall be forgotten—what shall—what shall I do!' said Cecilia, covering her face with her hands.

Such was her situation, when Leonora, accompanied by her companions, opened the hall-door; they most of them ran forwards to Cecilia. As Leonora came into the bower, she held out her hand to Cecilia—'we are not rivals but friends, I hope,' said she: Cecilia clasped her hand, but she was in too great agitation to speak.

The table was now set in the arbour—the vase was now placed in the middle. 'Well!' said Cecilia, eagerly, 'who begins?' Caroline, one of her friends, came forwards first, and then all the others successively. Cecilia's emotion was hardly conceivable. 'Now they are all in! count them, Caroline!'

'One, two, three, four; the numbers are both equal.'

There was a dead silence.

'No, they are not,' exclaimed Cecilia, pressing forward and putting a shell into a vase—'I have not given mine, and I give it to Leonora.' Then snatching the bracelet, 'it is yours, Leonora,' said she, 'take it, and give me back your friendship.' The whole assembly gave an universal clap, and shout of applause.

'I cannot be surprised at this from you, Cecilia,' said Leonora; 'and do you then still love me as you used to do?'.

'Oh Leonora! stop! don't praise me; I don't deserve this,' said she, turning to her loudly applauding companions; 'you will soon despise me. Oh, Leonora, you will never forgive me! I have deceived you; I have sold——'

At this instant Mrs. Villars appeared: the crowd divided—she had heard all that passed from her window.

'I applaud your generosity, Cecilia,' said she, 'but I am to tell you, that in this instance it is unsuccessful: you have it not in your power to give the prize to Leonora, it is yours. I have another vote to give you —you have forgotten Louisa.'

'Louisa! but surely, ma'am, Louisa loves Leonora better than she does me.'

'She commissioned me, however,' said Mrs. Villars, 'to give you a red shell; and you will find it in this box.'

Cecilia started, and turned as pale as death—it was the fatal box.

Mrs. Villars produced another box; she opened it—it contained the Flora; 'and Louisa also desired me,' said she, 'to return you this Flora;' she put it into Cecilia's hand; Cecilia trembled so that she could not hold it; Leonora caught it.

'Oh madam! oh Leonora!' exclaimed Cecilia; 'now I have no hope left. I intended—I was just going to tell——'

'Dear Cecilia,' said Leonora, 'you need not tell it me, I know it already, and I forgive you with all my heart.'

'Yes, I can prove to you,' said Mrs. Villars, 'that Leonora has forgiven you: it is she who has given you the prize; it was she who persuaded Louisa to give you her vote. I went to see her a little while ago, and perceiving, by her countenance, that something was the matter, I pressed her to tell me what it was.'

'Why, madam,' said she, 'Leonora has made me promise to give my shell to

Cecilia; now I don't love Cecilia half so well as I do Leonora; besides, I would not have Cecilia think I vote for her, because she gave me a Flora.' 'Whilst Louisa was speaking,' continued Mrs. Villars, 'I saw this silver box lying on the bed; I took it up, and asked, if it was not yours, and how she came by it.'

'Indeed, madam,' said Louisa,' 'I could have been almost certain that it was Cecilia's; but Leonora gave it me, and she said that she bought it of the pedlar this morning; if any body else had told me so, I could not have believed them, because I remembered the box so well; but I can't help believing Leonora.'

'But did not you ask Cecilia about it?' said I.

'No, madam,' replied Louisa, 'for Leonora forbad me.'

'I guessed her reason. Well,' said I, 'give me the box, and I will carry your shell in it to Cecilia.'

'Then, madam,' said she, 'if I must give it her, pray do take the Flora, and return it to her first, that she may not think it is for that I do it.'

'Oh, generous Leonora!' exclaimed

Cecilia; 'but indeed, Louisa, I cannot take your shell,'

'Then, dear Cecilia, accept of mine instead of it; you cannot refuse it, I only follow your example; as for the bracelet,' added Leonora, taking Cecilia's hand, 'I assure you I don't wish for it, and you do, and you deserve it.'

'No,' said Cecilia, 'indeed I do not deserve it; next to you, surely Louisa deserves it best.'

'Louisa! oh yes, Louisa!' exclaimed every body with one voice.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Villars, 'and let Cecilia carry the bracelet to her; she deserves that reward. For one fault I cannot forget all your merits, Cecilia; nor, I am sure, will your companions.'

'Then, surely, not your best friend,' said Leonora kissing her.

Every body present was moved; they looked up to Leonora with respectful and affectionate admiration.

'Oh, Leonora, how I love you! and how I wish to be like you!' exclaimed Cecilia; 'to be as good, as generous!'

'Rather wish, Cecilia,' interrupted Mrs. Villars, 'to be as just; to be as strictly honourable, and as invariably consistent.'

'Remember, that many of our sex are capable of great efforts, of making, what they call great sacrifices to virtue, or to friendship; but few treat their friends with habitual gentleness, or uniformly conduct themselves with prudence and good sense.'

THE LITTLE MERCHANTS.

CHAPTER I.

Chi di gallina nasce convien che rozole.
As the old cock crows, so crows the young.

THOSE who have visited Italy, give us an agreeable picture of the cheerful industry of the children of all ages in the celebrated city of Naples: their manner of living, and their numerous employments, are exactly described in the following 'extract from a Traveller's Journal.' *

'The children are busied in various ways. A great number of them bring fish for sale to town from Santa Lucia; others are very often seen about the arsenals, or wherever carpenters are at work, employed in gathering up the chips and pieces of wood, or by the sea side picking up sticks, and whatever

* Varieties of Literature, vol. 1. page 299.

else has drifted ashore ; which, when their basket is full, they carry away. Children of two or three years old, who can scarcely crawl along upon the ground, in company with boys of five or six, are employed in this petty trade. Hence they proceed with their baskets into the heart of the city, where in several places they form a sort of little market, sitting round with their stock of wood before them. Labourers, and the lower order of citizens buy it of them, to burn in the tripods for warming themselves, or to use in their scanty kitchens. Other children carry about for sale the water of the sulphureous wells, which, particularly in the spring season, is drunk in great abundance. Others again endeavour to turn a few pence by buying a small matter of fruit, of pressed honey, cakes, and comfits, and then, like little pedlars, offer and sell them to other children, always for no more profit than that they may have their share of them free of expense. It is really curious to see how an urchin whose whole stock and property consists in a board and a knife, will carry about a water melon, or a half roasted gourd, collect a troop of children round him, set down his board, and proceed to divide the fruit into small pieces among them.

The buyers keep a sharp look out, to see that they have enough for their little piece of copper ; and the lilliputian tradesman acts with no less caution, as the exigencies of the case may require, to prevent his being cheated out of a morsel.'

The advantages of truth and honesty, and the value of a character for integrity, are very early felt amongst these little merchants in their daily intercourse with each other. The fair dealer is always sooner or later seen to prosper, the most cunning cheat is at last detected and disgraced.

Numerous instances of the truth of this common observation were remarked by many Neapolitan children, especially by those who were acquainted with the characters and history of Piedro and Francisco, two boys originally equal in birth, fortune, and capacity, but different in their education, and consequently in their habits and conduct. Francisco was the son of an honest gardener, who, from the time he could speak, taught him to love to speak the truth, shewed him that liars are never believed, that cheats and thieves cannot be trusted, and that the shortest way to obtain a good character is to deserve it. Youth and white paper, as the proverb says, take all impres-

sions. The boy profited much by his father's precepts, and more by his example; he always heard his father speak the truth, and saw that he dealt fairly with every body. In all his childish traffick, Francisco, imitating his parents, was scrupulously honest, and therefore all his companions trusted him. 'As honest as Francisco,' became a sort of proverb amongst them.

'As honest as Francisco,' repeated Piedro's father, when he one day heard this saying; 'let them say so: I say, as sharp as Piedro, and let us see which will go through the world best.' With the idea of making his son *sharp*, he made him cunning; he taught him, that to make a *good bargain* was to deceive as to the value and price of whatever he wanted to dispose of, to get as much money as possible from customers by taking advantage of their ignorance, or of their confidence; he often repeated his favourite proverb, 'the buyer has need of a hundred eyes; the seller has need but of one.'* And he took frequent opportunities of explaining the meaning of this maxim to his son. He was a fisherman, and as his

* Chi compra ha bisogna di cent occhi, chi vende n'ha assai di uno.

gains depended more upon fortune than upon prudence, he trusted habitually to his good luck. After being idle for a whole day, he would cast his line or his nets, and if he was lucky enough to catch a fine fish, he would go and shew it in triumph to his neighbour the gardener—'You are obliged to work all day long for your daily bread,' he would say, 'look here, I work but five minutes, and I have not only daily bread, but daily fish.' Upon these occasions our fisherman always forgot, or neglected to count the hours and days which were wasted in waiting for a fair wind to put to sea, or angling in vain on the shore. Little Piedro who used to bask in the sun upon the sea shore beside his father, and to lounge or sleep away his time in a fishing boat, acquired habits of idleness, which seemed to his father of little consequence whilst he was *but a child.* 'What will you do with Piedro as he grows up, neighbour,' said the gardener, 'he is smart and quick enough, but he is always in mischief. Scarcely a day has passed for this fortnight, but I have caught him amongst my grapes. I track his footsteps all over my vineyard.'

'*He is but a child* yet, and knows no better,' replied the fisherman.

'But if you don't teach him better now he is a child, how will he know better when he is a man?' said the gardener.

'A mighty noise about a bunch of grapes, truly!' cried the fisherman; 'A few grapes more or less in your vineyard, what does it signify?'

'I speak for your son's sake, and not for the sake of my grapes,' said the gardener, 'and I tell you again, the boy will not do well in the world, neighbour, if you don't look after him in time.'

'He'll do well enough in the world, you will find,' answered the fisherman, carelessly; 'whenever he casts my nets they never come up empty. It is better to be lucky than wise.'*

This was a proverb which Piedro had frequently heard from his father, and to which he most willingly trusted, because it gave him less trouble to fancy himself fortunate, than to make himself wise. 'Come here, child,' said his father to him, when he returned home after the preceding conversation with the gardener; 'how old are you, my boy, twelve years old, is it not?'

'As old as Francisco, and older by six months,' said Piedro.

* E' meglio esser fortunato que savia.

'And smarter and more knowing by six years,' said his father. 'Here, take these fish to Naples, and let us see how you'll sell them for me. Venture a small fish, as the proverb says, to catch a great one*. I was too late with them at the market yesterday, but nobody will know but what they are just fresh out of the water, unless you go and tell them.'

'Not I, trust me for that, I'm not such a fool,' replied Piedro, laughing; 'I leave that to Francisco. Do you know I saw him the other day miss selling a melon for his father by turning the bruised side to the customer, who was just laying down the money for it, and who was a raw servant boy, moreover; one who would never have guessed there were two sides to a melon, if he had not, as you say father, been told of it.'

'Off with you to market; you are a droll chap,' said his father, 'and will sell my fish cleverly, I'll be bound; as to the rest, let every man take care of his own grapes—you understand me Piedro?'

'Perfectly,' said the boy, who perceived that his father was indifferent, as to his honesty, provided he sold fish at the highest

* Butta una sardella per pigliar un luccio.

price possible. He proceeded to the market, and he offered his fish with assiduity to every person, whom he thought likely to buy it, especially to those upon whom he thought he could impose. He positively asserted to all who looked at his fish, that they were just fresh out of the water; good judges of men and fish knew that he said what was false, and passed him by with neglect; but it was at last what he called his *good luck* to meet with the very same young raw servant boy, who would have bought the bruised melon from Francisco. He made up to him directly, crying, 'Fish! fine fresh fish! fresh fish.'

'Was it caught to day?' said the boy.

'Yes, this morning; not an hour ago;' said Piedro, with the greatest effrontery.

The servant boy was imposed upon, and being a foreigner, speaking the Italian language but imperfectly, and not being expert at reckoning the Italian money, he was no match for the cunning Piedro, who cheated him not only as to the freshness, but as to the price of the commodity. Piedro received nearly half as much again for his fish as he ought to have done.

On his road homewards from Naples to the little village of Resina, where his father

lived, he overtook Francisco, who was leading his father's ass; the ass was laden with large panniers, which were filled with the stalks and leaves of cauliflowers, cabbages, brocoli, lettuces, &c. all the refuse of the Neapolitan kitchens, which are usually collected by the gardeners' boys, and carried to the gardens round Naples, to be mixed with other manure.

'Well filled panniers truly,' said Piedro, as he overtook Francisco, and the ass. The panniers were indeed not only filled to the top, but piled up with much skill and care, so that the load met over the animal's back.

'It is not a very heavy load for the ass, though it looks so large,' said Francisco; 'poor fellow, however, he shall have a little of this water,' added he, leading the ass to a pool by the road side.

'I was not thinking of the ass, man; I was not thinking of any ass, but of you, when I said well filled panniers, truly! This is your morning's work, I presume, and you'll make another journey to Naples to-day, on the same errand, I warrant, before your father thinks you have done enough.'

'Not before *my father* thinks I have done enough, but before I think so myself,' replied Francisco.

'I do enough to satisfy myself and my father too, without slaving myself after your fashion. Look here,' said Piedro, producing the money he had received for the fish; 'All this was had for asking for; it is no bad thing, you'll allow, to know how to ask for money properly.'

'I should be ashamed to beg, or borrow either,' said Francisco.

'Neither did I get what you see by begging, or borrowing either,' said Piedro, 'but by using my wits: not as you did yesterday, when, like a novice, you shewed the bruised side of your melon, and so spoiled your market by your wisdom.'

'Wisdom I think it still,' said Francisco.

'And your father?'

'And my father,' said Francisco.

'Mine is of a different way of thinking,' said Piedro; 'he always tells me, that the buyer has need of an hundred eyes, and if one can blind the whole hundred, so much the better. You must know, I got off the fish to-day that my father could not sell yesterday in the market—got it off for fresh, just out of the river—got twice as much as the market price for it, and from whom think you? why, from the very booby, that would have bought the bruised melon for

a sound one, if you would have let him. You'll allow I'm no fool, Francisco, and that I'm in a fair way to grow rich, if I go on as I have begun.'

'Stay,' said Francisco, 'you forgot that the booby you took in to-day will not be so easily taken in to-morrow. He will buy no more fish from you, because he will be afraid of your cheating him; but he will be ready enough to buy fruit from me, because he will know I shall not cheat him; so you'll have lost a customer, and I gained one.'

'With all my heart,' said Piedro, 'one customer does not make a market; if he buys no more from me, what care I? there are people enough to buy fish in Naples.'

'And do you mean to serve them all in the same manner?'

'If they will be only so good as to give me leave,' said Piedro, laughing, and repeating his father's proverb, 'venture a small fish to catch a large one.'* He had learned to think, that to cheat in making bargains was witty and clever.

'And you have never considered then,' said Francisco, 'that all these people will, one after another, find you out in time?'

* Butta una sardella per pigliar un luccio.

'Aye, in time, but it will be some time first, there are a great many of them, enough to last me all summer, if I lose a customer a day,' said Piedro.

'And next summer, what will you do?'

'Next summer is not come yet; there is time enough to think what I shall do before next summer comes. Why, now, suppose the blockheads, after they had been taken in, and found it out, all joined against me, and would buy none of our fish—what then? Are there no trades going but that of a fisherman? In Naples, are there not a hundred ways of making money for a smart lad like me? as my father says. What do you think of turning merchant, and selling sugar-plums and cakes to the children in their market? would they be hard to deal with, think you?'

'I think not,' said Francisco; 'but I think the children would find out in time if they were cheated, and would like it as little as the men.'

'I don't doubt them; then *in time* I could, you know, change my trade, sell chips and sticks in the wood market; hand about lemonade to the fine folks, or twenty other things; there are trades enough, man.'

'Yes, for the honest dealer,' said Francisco, 'but for no other; for in all of them you'll find, as *my* father says, that a good character is the best fortune to set up with. Change your trade ever so often, you'll be found out for what you are at last.'

'And what am I, pray?' said Piedro, angrily; 'the whole truth of the matter is, Francisco, that you envy my good luck, and can't bear to hear this money jingle in my hand. Aye, stroke the long ears of your ass, and look as wise as you please. It's better to be lucky than wise, as *my* father says. Good morning to you: when I am found out for what I am, or when the worst comes to the worst, I can drive a stupid ass, with his panniers filled with rubbish, as well as you do now, *honest Francisco*.'

'Not quite so well; unless you were *honest Francisco*, you would not fill his panniers quite so readily.'

This was certain, that Francisco was so well known for his honesty amongst all the people at Naples, with whom his father was acquainted, that every one was glad to deal with him; and as he never wronged any one, all were willing to serve him, at least as much as they could without loss to themselves; so that after the market was over, his panniers

were regularly filled by the gardeners and others, with whatever he wanted. His industry was constant, his gains small but certain, and he every day had more and more reason to trust to his father's maxim; that honesty is the best policy.

The foreign servant lad, to whom Francisco had so honestly, or, as Piedro said, so sillily, shewn the bruised side of the melon, was an Englishman. He left his native country, of which he was extremely fond, to attend upon his master, to whom he was still more attached. His master was in a declining state of health, and this young lad waited upon him more to his mind than his other servants. We must, in consideration of his zeal, fidelity, and inexperience, pardon him for not being a good judge of fish. Though he had simplicity enough to be easily cheated once, he had too much sense to be twice made a dupe. The next time he met Piedro in the market, he happened to be in company with several English gentlemen's servants, and he pointed Piedro out to them all as an errant knave; they heard his cry of 'fresh fish! fresh fish! fine fresh fish!' with incredulous smiles, and let him pass, but not without some expressions of contempt, which though uttered in English, he tolerably well

understood, for the tone of contempt is sufficiently expressive in all languages. He lost more by not selling his fish to these people, than he had gained the day before by cheating the *English booby*. The market was well supplied, and he could not get rid of his cargo. 'Is not this truly provoking,' said he, as he passed by Francisco, who was selling fruit for his father. 'Look, my basket is as heavy as when I left home, and look at 'em yourself, they really are fine fresh fish to-day, and yet, because that revengeful booby told how I took him in yesterday, not one of yonder crowd would buy them; and all the time they really are fresh to-day.'

'So they are,' said Francisco; 'but you said so yesterday when they were not, and he that was duped then, is not ready to believe you to-day. How does he know that you deserve it better?'

'He might have looked at the fish, they are fresh to-day. I'm sure,' repeated Piedro, 'he need not have been afraid to-day.'

'Aye,' said Francisco, 'but, as my father said to you once, the scalded dog fears cold water*.'

* L'an scottato de l'acqua calda ha paura poi della fredda.

Here their conversation was interrupted by the approach of this same English lad, who smiled as he came up to Francisco, and taking up a fine pine apple, he said, in a mixture of bad Italian and English, 'I need not look at the other side of this, you will tell me if it is not as good as it looks; name your price, I know you have but one, and that an honest one, and as to the rest, I am able and willing to pay for what I buy; that is to say, my master is, which comes to the same thing. I wish your fruit could make him well, and it would be worth its weight in gold, to me at least. We must have some of your grapes for him.'

'Is not he well? we must then pick out the best for him,' said Francisco, singling out a tempting bunch. 'I hope he will like these; but if you could some day come as far as Resina, it is a village but a few miles out of town, where we have our vineyard, you could there choose for yourself, and pluck them fresh from the vines for your poor master.'

'God bless you, my good boy, I should take you for an Englishman, by your way of dealing with one. I'll come to your village, only write me down the name, for your Italian names slip through my head; I'll

come to your vineyard if it was ten miles off; and all the time we stay in Naples (God send it may not be so long as I fear it will) I'll, with my master's leave, which he never refuses me to any thing that's proper, and that's what this is, deal with you for all our fruit, as sure as my name's Arthur, and with none else, with my good will. I wish all your countrymen would take after you in honesty—so I do—' concluded the Englishman, looking full at Piedro, who took up his heavy melancholy basket of fish and walked off looking somewhat silly.

Arthur, the English servant, was as good as his word; he dealt constantly with Francisco, and proved an excellent customer, buying from him during the whole season as much fruit as his master wanted. His master, who was an Englishman of distinction, was invited to take up his residence during his stay in Italy, at the Count de F—'s villa, which was in the environs of Naples, an easy walk from Resina. Francisco had the pleasure of seeing his father's vineyard often full of generous visitors; and Arthur, who had circulated the anecdote of the bruised melon, was, he said, 'proud to think that some of this was his doing, and that an Englishman

never forgot a good turn, be it from a countryman or foreigner.'

'My dear boy,' said Francisco's father to him, whilst Arthur was in the vineyard helping to tend the vines, 'I am to thank you and your honesty, it seems, for our having our hands so full of business this season. It is fair you should have a share of our profits.'

'So I have father, enough and enough, when I see you and mother going on so well: what can I want more?'

'Oh, my brave boy, we know you are a grateful, good son; but I have been your age myself; you have companions; you have little expenses of your own. Here—this vine, this fig-tree, and a melon a week next summer shall be yours: with these you'll make a fine figure amongst the little Neapolitan merchants; and all I wish is, you may prosper as well, and by the same honest means, in managing for yourself, as you have done, managing for me.'

'Thank you, father, and if I prosper at all, it shall be by those means and no other, or I should not be worthy to be called your son.'

Piedro, the cunning, did not make quite so successful a summer's work as did Francisco, the honest. No extraordinary events

happened, no singular instance of bad or good luck occurred; but he felt, as persons usually do, the natural consequences of his own actions. He pursued his scheme of imposing, as far as he could, upon every person he dealt with, and the consequence was, that at last nobody would deal with him. 'It is easy to out-wit one person, but impossible to out-wit all the world,' said a man* who knew the world at least as well as either Piedro, or his father. Piedro's father, amongst others, had reason to complain; he saw his old customers fall off from him, and was told, whenever he went into the market, that his son was such a cheat, there was no dealing with him. One day when he was returning from market in a very bad humour, in consequence of these reproaches, and of his not having found customers for his goods, he espied his *smart* son Piedro, at a little merchant's fruit board, devouring a fine gourd with prodigious greediness. 'Where glutton, do you find money to pay for these dainties?' exclaimed his father, coming close up to him with angry gestures. Piedro's mouth was much too full

* The duke de Rochefoucault—'On peut être plus fin qu'un autre, mais pas plus fin que tous les autres.'

to make an immediate reply, nor did his father wait for any, but darting his hand into the youth's pocket, pulled forth a handful of silver.

'The money, father,' said Piedro, 'that I got for the fish yesterday, and that I meant to give you to-day, before you went out.'

'Then I'll make you remember it against another time, sirrah!' said his father, 'I'll teach you to fill your stomach with my money! Am I to lose my customers by your tricks, and then find you here eating my all? You are a rogue, and every body has found you out to be a rogue; and the worst of rogues I find you, who scruples not to cheat his own father.' Saying these words, with great vehemence, he seized hold of Piedro, and in the very midst of the little fruit market gave him a severe beating. This beating did the boy no good; it was vengeance, not punishment. Piedro saw that his father was in a passion, and knew that he was beaten because he was found out to be a rogue, rather than for being one; he recollected perfectly, that his father once said to him, 'let every one take care of his own grapes.' Indeed it was scarcely reasonable to expect, that a boy who had

been educated to think that he might cheat every customer he could in the way of trade, should be afterwards scrupulously honest in his conduct towards the father, whose proverbs encouraged his childhood in cunning. Piedro writhed with bodily pain, as he left the market, after his drubbing, but his mind was not in the least amended; on the contrary, he was hardened to the sense of shame, by the loss of reputation. All the little merchants were spectators of this scene, and heard his father's words; 'You are a rogue, and the worst of rogues, who scruples not to cheat his own father.' These words were long remembered, and long did Piedro feel their effects. He once flattered himself, that, when his trade of selling fish failed him, he could readily engage in some other; but he now found to his mortification, that what Francisco's father said proved true, in all trades the best fortune to set up with is a good character. Not one of the little Neapolitan merchants would either enter into partnership with him, give him credit, or even trade with him for ready money. 'If you would cheat your own father, to be sure you will cheat us,' was continually said to him by these prudent little people. Piedro was taunted and treated

with contempt at home and abroad. His father, when he found that his son's *smartness* was no longer useful in making bargains, shoved him out of his way whenever he met him; all the food or clothes that he had at home seemed to be given to him grudgingly, and with such expressions as these—'Take that, but it is too good for you; you must eat this, now, instead of gourds and figs, and be thankful you have even this. Piedro spent a whole winter very unhappily; he expected that all his old tricks, and especially what his father had said of him in the market place would be soon forgotten; but month passed after month, and still these things were fresh in the memory of all who had known them. It is not easy to get rid of a bad character. A very great rogue* was once heard to say, that he would, with all his heart, give ten thousand pounds for a good character, because he knew that he could make twenty thousand by it. Something like this was the sentiment of our cunning hero, when he experienced the evils of a bad reputation, and when he saw the numerous advantages which Francisco's good character procured.

* Chartres.

Such had been Piedro's wretched education, that even the hard lessons of experience could not alter its pernicious effects. He was sorry his knavery had been detected, but he still thought it clever to cheat, and was secretly persuaded, that if he had cheated successfully, he should have been happy. 'But I know I am not happy now,' said he to himself one morning, as he sat alone disconsolate by the sea shore, dressed in tattered garments, weak and hungry, with an empty basket beside him. His fishing rod, which he held between his knees, bent over the dry sands instead of into the water, for he was not thinking of what he was about; his arms were folded, his head hung down, and his ragged hat was slouched over his face. He was a melancholy spectacle. Francisco, as he was coming from his father's vineyard with a large dish of purple and white grapes upon his head, and a basket of melons and figs hanging upon his arm, chanced to see Piedro seated in this melancholy posture. Touched with compassion, Francisco approached him softly; his footsteps were not heard upon the sands, and Piedro did not perceive that any one was near him, till he felt something cold touch

his hand ; he then started, and looking up, saw a bunch of ripe grapes, which Francisco was holding over his head.

'Eat them, you'll find them very good, I hope,' said Francisco, with a benevolent smile.

'They are excellent—most excellent, and I am much obliged to you Francisco,' said Piedro. 'I was very hungry, and that's what I often am now, without any body's caring any thing about it. I am not the favourite I was with my father, but I know it is all my own fault.'

'Well, but cheer up,' said Francisco, 'my father always says, one who knows he has been in fault, and acknowledges it, will scarcely be in fault again. Yes, take as many figs as you will,' continued he, and he held his basket closer to Piedro, who, as he saw, cast a hungry eye upon one of the ripe figs.

'But,' said Piedro, after he had taken several, 'shall not I get you into a scrape by taking so many? Won't your father be apt to miss them?'

'Do you think I would give them to you if they were not my own?' said Francisco, with a sudden glance of indignation.

'Well don't be angry that I asked the question; it was only from fear of getting you into disgrace that I asked it.'

'It would not be easy for any body to do that, I hope,' said Francisco, rather proudly.

'And to me less than any body,' replied Piedro, in an insinuating tone, '*I*, that am so much obliged to you!'

'A bunch of grapes, and a few figs are no mighty obligation,' said Francisco, smiling; 'I wish I could do more for you; you seem, indeed, to have been very unhappy of late; we never see you in the markets as we used to do.'

'No, ever since my father beat me, and called me a rogue, before all the children there, I have never been able to shew my face without being gibed at by one or t'other. If you would but take me along with you amongst them, and only just *seem* my friend for a day or two, or so, it would quite set me up again, for they all like you.'

'I would rather *be* than seem your friend, if I could,' said Francisco.

'Aye, to be sure, that would be still better,' said Piedro, observing that Francisco, as he uttered his last sentence, was separating the grapes, and other fruit, into two equal divisions—'To be sure I would rather

you would *be* than *seem* a friend to me; but I thought that was too much to ask at first —though I have a notion, notwithstanding I have been so *unlucky* lately—I have a notion you would have no reason to repent of it; you would find me no bad hand if you were to try and take me into partnership.'

'Partnership!' interrupted Francisco, drawing back alarmed; 'I had no thoughts of that.'

'But won't you, can't you,' said Piedro, in a supplicating tone; '*can't* you have thoughts of it? You'd find me a very active partner.'

Francisco, still drew back, and kept his eyes fixed upon the ground: he was embarrassed, for he pitied Piedro, and he scarcely knew how to point out to him that something more is necessary in a partner in trade besides activity—honesty.

'Can't you?' repeated Piedro, thinking that he hesitated from merely mercenary motives. 'You shall have what share of the profits you please.'

'I was not thinking of the profits,' said Francisco, 'but without meaning to be ill-natured to you, Piedro, I must say, that I cannot enter into any partnership with you at present; but I will do what, perhaps, you

will like as well,' said he taking half the fruit out of his basket. 'You are heartily welcome to this; try and sell it in the children's fruit market; I'll go on before you, and speak to those I am acquainted with, and tell them you are going to set up a new character, and that you hope to make it a good one.'

'Hey, shall I? Thank you for ever, dear Francisco,' cried Piedro, seizing his plentiful gift of fruit, 'say what you please for me.'

'But don't make me say any thing that is not true,' said Francisco, pausing.

'No, to be sure not,' said Piedro; 'I *do* mean to give no room for scandal. If I could get them to trust me as they do you, I should be happy indeed.'

'That is what you may do, if you please,' said Francisco. 'Adieu, I wish you well with all my heart, but I must leave you now, or I shall be too late for the market.'

THE LITTLE MERCHANTS.

CHAPTER II.

Chi va piano, va sano, e anche lontano.
Fair and softly goes far in a day.

PIEDRO had now an opportunity to establish a good character. When he went into the market with his grapes and figs, he found that he was not shunned or taunted as usual; all seemed disposed to believe in his intended reformation, and to give him a fair trial. These favourable dispositions towards him were the consequence of Francisco's benevolent representations: he told them that he thought Piedro had suffered enough to cure him of his tricks, and that it would be cruelty in them, because he might once have been in fault, to banish him by their reproaches from amongst them, and thus to prevent him from the means of gaining his livelihood honestly. Piedro

made a good beginning, and gave what several of the younger customers thought excellent bargains: his grapes and figs were quickly sold, and with the money that he got for them, he the next day purchased from a fruit dealer a fresh supply, and thus he went on for some time, conducting himself with scrupulous honesty, so that he acquired some credit amongst his companions. They no longer watched him with suspicious eyes; they trusted to his measures and weights, and they counted less carefully the change which they received from him. The satisfaction he felt from this alteration in their manners was at first delightful to him; but in proportion to his credit, his opportunities of defrauding increased, and these became temptations which he had not the firmness to resist. His old manner of thinking recurred. 'I make but a few shillings a day, and this is but slow work,' said he to himself; 'what signifies my good character if I make so little by it?' Light gains, and frequent, make a heavy purse,* was one of Francisco's proverbs. But Piedro was in too great haste to get rich to take *time* into his account. He set his invention

* Poco è spesso empie ilborsetto.

to work, and he did not want for ingenuity to devise means of cheating, without running the risk of detection. He observed that the younger part of the community were extremely fond of certain coloured sugar-plums, and of burnt almonds; with the money he had earned by two months' trading in fruit, he layed in a large stock, or what appeared to these little merchants a large stock of these almonds and sugar-plums, and he painted in capital gold coloured letters upon his board, 'the sweetest, largest, most 'admirable sugar-plums of all colours, ever 'sold in Naples, to be had here; and in gra-'titude to his numerous customers, Piedro 'adds to these burnt almonds gratis.'

This advertisement attracted the attention of all who could read, and many who could not read, heard it repeated with delight. Crowds of children surrounded Piedro's board of promise, and they all went away the first day amply satisfied; each had a full measure of coloured sugar-plums at the usual price, and along with these a burnt almond gratis. The burnt almond had such an effect upon the public judgment, that it was universally allowed the sugar-plums were, as the advertisement set forth, the largest, sweetest, most admirable ever sold in

Naples; though all the time these were in no respect better than any other sugar-plums. It was generally reported, that Piedro gave full measure, fuller than was to be had at any other board in the city; he measured the sugar-plums in a little cubical tin box, and this, it was affirmed, he heaped up to the top, and pressed down before he poured out the contents into the open hands of his approving customers. This belief, and Piedro's popularity, continued longer even than he had expected; and, as he thought his sugar-plums had now secured their reputation with *the generous publick*, he gradually neglected to add burnt almonds gratis. One day a boy of about ten years old passed carelessly by, whistling as he went along, and swinging a carpenter's rule in his hand. 'Ha! what have we here?' cried he, stopping to read what was written on Piedro's board. 'This promises rarely. Old as I am, and tall of my age, which makes the matter worse, I am still as fond of sugar-plums as my little sister, who is five years younger than I. Come, Signor, fill me quick, for I'm in haste to taste them, two measures of the sweetest, largest, most admirable sugar-plums in Naples; one measure for myself, and one for my little Rosetta.'

'You'll pay for yourself and your sister then,' said Piedro, 'for no credit is given here.'

'No credit do I ask,' replied the lively boy; 'when I told you I loved sugar-plums; did I tell you I loved them, or even my sister, so well as to run in debt for them? Here's for myself, and here's for my sister's share,' said he, laying down his money; 'and now for the burnt almonds gratis, my good fellow.'

'They are all out, I have been out of burnt almonds this great while,' said Piedro.

'Then why are they in your advertisement here?' said Carlo.

'I have not had time to scratch them out of the board.'

'What, not when you have, by your own account, been out of them a great while? I did not know it required so much time to blot out a few words—let us try;' and as he spoke, Carlo, for that was the name of Piedro's new customer, pulled a bit of white chalk out of his pocket, and drew a broad score across the line on the board which promised burnt almonds gratis.

'You are most impatient,' said Piedro; 'I shall have a fresh stock of almonds to-morrow.'

'Why must the board tell a lie to-day?'

'It would ruin me to alter it,' said Piedro.

'A lie may ruin you, but I could scarcely think the truth could.'

'You have no right to meddle with me or my board,' said Piedro, put off his guard, and out of his usual soft voice of civility, by this last observation. 'My character, and that of my board, are too firmly established now for any chance customer like you to injure.'

'I never dreamed of injuring you or any one else,' said Carlo, 'I wish moreover, you may not injure yourself. Do as you please with your board, but give me my sugar-plums, for I have some right to meddle with those, having paid for them.'

'Hold out your hand then.'

'No, put them in here if you please, put my sister's at least in here, she likes to have them in this box; I bought some for her in it yesterday, and she'll think they'll taste the better out of the same box. But how is this! your measure does not fill my box nearly; you give us very few sugar-plums for our money.'

'I give you full measure, as I give to every body.'

'The measure should be an inch cube, I know,' said Carlo; 'that's what all the little merchants have agreed to, you know.'

'True,' said Piedro, 'so it is.'

'And so it is, I must allow,' said Carlo, measuring the outside of it with the carpenter's rule which he held in his hand, 'an inch every way; and yet by my eye, and I have no bad one, being used to measuring carpenter's work for my father; by my eye I should think this would have held more sugar-plums.'

'The eye often deceives us,' said Piedro; 'there's nothing like measuring you find.'

'There's nothing like measuring I find, indeed,' replied Carlo, as he looked closely at the end of his rule, which, since he spoke last, he had put into the tin cube to take its depth in the inside. 'This is not as deep by a quarter of an inch, Signor Piedro, measured within, as it is measured without.'

Piedro changed colour terribly, and seizing hold of the tin box, endeavoured to wrest it from the youth who measured so accurately. Carlo held his prize fast, and lifting it above his head, he ran into the midst of the square where the little market was held, exclaiming, 'A discovery! a discovery! that concerns all who love sugar-plums. A dis-

covery! a discovery! that concerns all who have ever bought the sweetest, largest, most admirable sugar-plums ever sold in Naples.'

The crowd gathered from all parts of the square as he spoke. 'We have bought, and we have bought of those sugar-plums,' cried several little voices at once, 'if you mean Piedro's.'

'The same,' continued Carlo, 'he who, out of gratitude to his numerous customers, gives, or promises to give, burnt almonds gratis.'

'Excellent they were!' cried several voices. 'We all know Piedro well; but what's your discovery?'

'My discovery is,' said Carlo, 'that you, none of you, know Piedro. Look you here, look at this box, this is his measure; it has a false bottom, it holds only three quarters as much as it ought to do, and his numerous customers have all been cheated of one quarter of every measure of the admirable sugar-plums they have bought from him. Think twice of a good bargain, says the proverb.'

'So we have been finely duped indeed,' cried some, looking at one another with a mortified air. Full of courtesy, full of craft!* 'So this is the meaning of his

* Chi te fa piu carezza che non vuole,
O ingannato t'ha, o ingannar te vuole.

burnt almonds gratis,' cried others; all joined in an uproar of indignation, except one, who, as he stood behind the rest, expressed in his countenance silent surprise and sorrow.

'Is this Piedro a relation of yours?' said Carlo, going up to this silent person; 'I am sorry, if he be, that I have published his disgrace, for I would not hurt *you;* you don't sell sugar-plums as he does I'm sure, for my little sister Rosetta has often bought from you. Can this Piedro be a friend of yours?'

'I wished to have been his friend, but I see I can't,' said Francisco; 'he is a neighbour of ours, and I pitied him; but since he is at his old tricks again, there's an end of the matter. I have reason to be obliged to you, for I was nearly taken in; he has behaved so well for some time past, that I intended this very evening to have gone to him, and to have told him, that I was willing to do for him what he has long begged of me to do, to enter into partnership with him.'

'Francisco! Francisco! your measure, lend us your measure!' exclaimed a number of the little merchants crowding round him. 'You have a measure for sugar-plums,

and we have all agreed to refer to that, and to see how much we have been cheated before we go to break Piedro's bench, and declare him bankrupt,* the punishment for all knaves.'

They pressed on to Francisco's board, obtained his measure, found that it held something more than a quarter above the quantity that could be contained in Piedro's. The cries of the enraged populace were now most clamorous; they hung the just and unjust measures upon high poles, and forming themselves into a formidable phalanx, they proceeded towards Piedro's well known yellow lettered board, exclaiming as they went along, 'Common cause! common cause! the little Neapolitan merchants will have no knaves amongst them! Break his bench! Break his bench! He is a bankrupt in honesty.'

Piedro saw the mob, heard the indignant clamour, and, terrified at the approach of numbers, he fled with the utmost precipita-

* This word comes from two Italian words Banco rotto—broken bench. Bankers and merchants used formerly to count their money, and write their bills of exchange upon benches in the streets, and when a merchant or banker lost his credit, and was unable to pay his debts, his bench was broken.

tion, having scarcely time to pack up half his sugar-plums; there was a prodigious number, more than would have filled many honest measures scattered upon the ground, and trampled under foot by the crowd, Piedro's bench was broken, and the public vengeance wreaked itself also upon his treacherous painted board. It was, after being much disfigured by various inscriptions expressive of the universal contempt for Piedro, hung up in a conspicuous part of the market place, and the false measure was fastened like a cap upon one of its corners. Piedro could never more shew his face in this market, and all hopes of friendship, all hopes of partnership with Francisco were for ever at an end.

If rogues could calculate, they would cease to be rogues, for they would certainly discover, that it is most for their interest to be honest, setting aside the pleasure of being esteemed and beloved, of having a safe conscience, with perfect freedom from all the various embarrassments and terrors to which knaves are subject; is it not clear, that our crafty hero would have gained rather more by a partnership with Francisco, and by a fair character, than he could possibly obtain by fraudulent dealings in comfits?

When the mob had dispersed, after satisfying themselves with executing summary justice upon Piedro's bench and board, Francisco found a carpenter's rule lying upon the ground near Piedro's broken bench, which he recollected to have seen in the hands of Carlo; he examined it carefully, and he found Carlo's name written upon it, and the name of the street where he lived; and though it was considerably out of his way, he set out immediately to restore the rule, which was a very handsome one, to its rightful owner. After a hot walk through several streets, he overtook Carlo, who had just reached the door of his own house. Carlo was particularly obliged to him, he said, for restoring this rule to him, as it was a present from the master of a vessel, who employed his father to do carpenter's work for him. 'One should not praise one's self, they say,' continued Carlo; but I long so much to give you a good opinion of me, that I must tell you the whole history of the rule you have saved; it was given to me for having measured the work, and made up the bill of a whole pleasure-boat myself. You may guess I should have been sorry enough to have lost it. Thank you for its being once more in my careless hands, and

tell me I beg whenever I can do you any service; by the by, I can make up for you a fruit stall; I'll do it to-morrow, and it shall be the admiration of the market. Is there any thing else you could think of for me?'

'Why, yes,' said Francisco, 'since you are so good-natured, perhaps you'd be kind enough to tell me the meaning of some of those lines and figures that I see upon your rule; I have a great curiosity to know their use.'

'That I'll explain to you with pleasure, as far as I know them myself; but when I'm at a fault, my father, who is cleverer than I am, and understands trigonometry, can help us out.'

'Trigonometry!' repeated Francisco, not a little alarmed at this high sounding word; 'that's what I certainly shall never understand.'

'Oh never fear,' replied Carlo, laughing; 'I looked just as you do now, I felt just as you do now, all in a fright and a puzzle, when I first heard of angles and sines, and vers-sines, and co-sines, and arcs, and centres, and complements, and tangents.'

'Oh mercy! mercy!' interrupted Francisco, whilst Carlo laughed with a sense, but with a benevolent sense of superiority.

'Why,' said he 'you'll find all these things are nothing when you are used to them—but I cannot explain my rule to you here broiling in the sun, besides, it will not be the work of a day I promise you; but come and see us at your leisure hours, and we'll study it together: I have a great notion we shall become friends, and to begin, step in with me now,' said Carlo, 'and eat a little macaroni with us, I know it is ready by this time; besides, you'll see my father, and he'll shew you plenty of rules and compasses, as you like such things, and then I'll go home with you in the cool of the evening, and you shall shew me your melons and vines, and teach me in time something of gardening. Oh, I see we must be good friends, just made for each other, so come in, no ceremony.'

Carlo was not mistaken in his predictions; he and Francisco became very good friends, spent all their leisure hours together, either in Carlo's workshop, or in Francisco's vineyard, and they mutually improved each other. Francisco, before he saw his friend's rule, knew but just enough of arithmetic to calculate in his head the price of the fruit which he sold in the market; but with Carlo's assistance, and with the

ambition to understand the tables and figures upon the wonderful rule, he set to work in earnest, and in due time, satisfied both himself and his master. 'Who knows but these things that I am learning now may be of some use to me before I die,' said Francisco, as he was sitting one morning with his tutor, the carpenter.

'To be sure it will,' said the carpenter, putting down his compasses with which he was drawing a circle, 'Arithmetic is a most useful, and I was going to say necessary thing to be known by men in all stations, and a little trigonometry does no harm; in short, my maxim is, no knowledge comes amiss; for a man's head is of as much use to him, and more than his hands.

* A word to the wise will always suffice.

Besides, to say nothing of making a fortune, is not there a great pleasure in being something of a scholar, and being able to pass one's time with one's book, and one's compasses and pencil? Safe companions these for young and old; no one gets into mischief that has pleasant things to think of.

* A buon intenditor, poche parole.

and to do when alone, and I know, for my part, trigonometry is——'

Here the carpenter, just as he was going to pronounce a fresh panegyric upon his favourite trigonometry, was interrupted by the sudden entrance of his little daughter Rosetta all in tears; a very unusual spectacle! Rosetta, take the year round, shed fewer tears than any child of her age in Naples. 'Why, my dear good-humoured little Rosetta, what has happened?'

'Why these large tears,' said her brother Carlo, and he went up to her, and wiped them from her cheeks, 'and these that are going over the bridge of the nose so fast? I must stop these tears too,' said Carlo. Rosetta, at this speech, burst out a laughing, and said, 'that she did not know till then, that she had any bridge on her nose.'

'And were these shells the cause of the tears?' said her brother, looking at a heap of shells which she held before her in her frock.

'Yes, partly,' said Rosetta, 'it was partly my own fault, but not all. You know I went out to the carpenter's yard, near the arsenal, where all the children are picking up chips and sticks so busily; and I was as busy as any of them, because I wanted to fill my

basket soon, and then I thought I should sell my basketful directly in the little wood market. And as soon as I had filled my basket, and made up my faggot, which was not done, brother, till I was almost baked by the sun, for I was forced to wait by the carpenters for the bits of wood to make up my faggot, I say, when it was all ready, and my basket full, I left it altogether in the yard.'

'That was not wise to leave it,' said Carlo.

'But I only left it for a few minutes, brother, and I could not think any body would be so dishonest as to take it whilst I was away. I only just ran to tell a boy, who had picked up all these beautiful shells upon the sea shore, and who wanted to sell them, that I should be glad to buy them from him, if he would only be so good as to keep them for me for an hour or so, till I had carried my wood to market, and till I had sold it, and so had money to pay him for the shells.'

'Your heart was set mightily on these shells, Rosetta?'

'Yes; for I thought you and Francisco, brother, would like to have them, for your nice grotto that you are making at Resina, that was the reason I was in such a hurry

to get them. The boy who had them to sell was very good-natured; he poured them into my lap, and said I had such an honest face, he would trust me, and that as he was in a great hurry, he could not wait an hour whilst I sold my wood; but that he was sure I would pay him in the evening, and he told me that he would call here this evening for the money; but now, what shall I do, Carlo? I shall have no money to give him, I must give him back his shells, and that's a great pity.'

'But how happened it that you did not sell your wood?'

'Oh, I forgot; did not I tell you that? When I went back for my basket, do you know it was empty, quite empty, not a chip left. Some dishonest person had carried it all off. Had not I reason to cry now, Carlo?'

'I'll go this minute into the wood-market, and see if I can find your faggot, won't that be better than crying?' said her brother. 'Should you know any one of your pieces of wood again, if you were to see them?'

'Yes, one of them, I am sure I should know again,' said Rosetta. 'It had a notch at one end of it, where one of the carpenters

cut it off from another piece of wood for me.'

'And is the piece of wood from which the carpenter cut it still to be seen?' said Francisco.

'Yes it is in the yard; but I cannot bring it to you, for it is very heavy.'

'We can go to it,' said Francisco, 'and I hope we shall recover your basket full.'

He and Carlo went with Rosetta immediately to the yard, near the arsenal, saw the notched piece of wood, and then proceeded to the little wood market, and searched every heap that lay before the little factors, but no notched bit was to be found, and Rosetta declared that she did not see one stick that looked at all like any of hers. On their part, her companions eagerly untied their faggots to shew them to her, and exclaimed, 'that they were incapable of taking what did not belong to them; that of all persons they should never have thought of taking any thing from the good-natured little Rosetta, who was always ready to give to others, and to help them in making up their loads.'

Despairing of discovering the thief, Francisco and Carlo left the market; as

they were returning home, they were met by the English servant Arthur, who asked Francisco where he had been, and where he was going. As soon as he heard of Rosetta's lost faggot, and of the bit of wood, notched at one end, of which Rosetta drew the shape with a bit of chalk that her brother lent her, Arthur exclaimed, 'I have seen such a bit of wood as this within this quarter of an hour, but I cannot recollect where. Stay—it was at the baker's I think, where I went for some rolls for my master. It was laying beside his oven.' To the baker's they all went as fast as possible, and they got there but just in time, the baker had in his hand the bit of wood, with which he was that instant going to feed his oven. 'Stop, good Mr. baker!' cried Rosetta, who ran into the baker's shop first, and as he heard stop! stop! re-echoed by many voices, the baker stopped, and turning to Francisco, Carlo, and Arthur, begged, with a countenance of some surprise, to know why they desired him to stop. The case was easily explained, and the baker told them, that he did not buy any wood in the little market that morning; that this faggot he had purchased, between the hours

of twelve and thirteen,* from a lad of about Francisco's height, whom he met near the yard of the arsenal.

'This is my bit of wood, I am sure; I know it by this notch,' said Rosetta.

'Well,' said the baker, 'if you will stay here a few minutes, you will probably see the lad who sold it to me; he desired to be paid in bread, and my bread was not quite baked when he was here; I bid him call again in an hour, and I fancy he will be pretty punctual, for he looked desperately hungry.'

The baker had scarcely finished speaking, when Francisco, who was standing watching at the door, exclaimed, 'here comes Piedro! I hope he is not the boy who sold you the wood, Mr. baker.

'He is the boy though,' replied the baker, and Piedro, who now entered the shop, started at the sight of Carlo and Francisco, whom he had never seen since the day of his disgrace in the fruit market.

'Your servant, Signor Piedro,' said Carlo; 'I have the honour to tell you, that

* The Italians begin their day at sun-set, and reckon the hours in an uninterrupted series from one to twenty-four.

this piece of wood, and all that you took out of the basket, which you found in the yard of the arsenal, belongs to my sister.'

'Yes, indeed,' cried Rosetta.

Piedro, being very certain that no body saw him when he emptied Rosetta's basket, and imagining that he was suspected only upon the bare assertion of a child like Rosetta, who might be baffled and frightened out of her story, boldly denied the charge, and defied any one to prove him guilty.

'He has a right to be heard in his own defence,' said Arthur, with the cool justice of an Englishman; and he stopped the angry Carlo's arm, who was going up to the culprit with all the Italian vehemence of oratory and gesture. Arthur went on to say something in bad Italian, about the excellence of an English trial by jury, which Carlo was too much enraged to hear, but to which Francisco paid attention, and turning to Piedro, he asked him if he was willing to be judged by twelve of his equals?

'With all my heart,' said Piedro, still maintaining an unmoved countenance, and they returned immediately to the little wood market.

In their way, they had passed through the fruit market, and crowds of those who

were well acquainted with Piedro's former transactions, followed to hear the event of the present trial. Arthur could not, especially as he spoke wretched Italian, make the eager little merchants understand the nature and advantages of an English trial by jury. They preferred their own summary mode of proceeding. Francisco, in whose integrity all had perfect confidence, was chosen with unanimous shouts for the judge, but he declined the office, and another was appointed. He was raised upon a bench, and the guilty, but insolent looking Piedro, and the ingenuous, modest Rosetta stood before him. She made her complaint in a very artless manner, and Piedro, with ingenuity, which in a better cause would have deserved admiration, spoke volubly and craftily in his own defence; but all that he could say could not alter facts. The judge compared the notched bit of wood found at the baker's, with the piece from which it was cut, which he went to see in the yard of the arsenal. It was found to fit exactly. The judge then found it impossible to restrain the loud indignation of all the spectators. The prisoner was sentenced never more to sell wood in that market, and the moment sentence was

pronounced, Piedro was hissed and hooted out of the market place. Thus a third time he deprived himself of the means of earning his bread.

We shall not dwell upon all his petty methods of cheating in the trades he next attempted. He handed lemonade about in a part of Naples where he was not known; but he lost his customers by putting too much water, and too little lemon into this beverage. He then took to the waters from the sulphureous springs, and served them about to foreigners; but one day, as he was trying to jostle a competitor from a coach door, he slipped his foot, and broke his glasses. They had been borrowed from an old woman, who hired out glasses to the boys who sold lemonade. Piedro knew that it was the custom to pay of course for all that were broken, but this he was not inclined to do; he had a few shillings in his pocket, and thought that it would be very clever to defraud this poor woman of her right, and to spend his shillings upon what he valued much more than he did his good name—macaroni. The shillings were soon gone. And we shall for the present leave Piedro to his follies, and his fate, or to speak

more properly, to his follies, and their inevitable consequences.

Francisco was all this time acquiring knowledge from his new friends, without neglecting his own or his father's business. He contrived, during the course of the autumn and winter, to make himself a tolerarable arithmetician. Carlo's father could draw plans in architecture neatly, and pleased with the eagerness Francisco shewed to receive instruction, he willingly put a pencil and compasses into his hand, and taught him all he knew himself. Francisco had great perseverance, and, by repeated trials, he at length succeeded in copying exactly all the plans which his master lent him. His copies, in time surpassed the originals, and Carlo exclaimed, with astonishment; 'why, Francisco, what an astonishing *genius* you have for drawing! absolutely you draw plans better than my father!'

'As to genius,' said Francisco, honestly, 'I have none. All that I have done has been done by hard labour; I don't know how other people do things, but I am sure that I never have been able to get any thing done well but by patience; don't you remember, Carlo, how you, and even Rosetta laughed

at me the first time your father put a pencil into my awkward, clumsy hands.'

'Because,' said Carlo, laughing again at the recollection, 'you held your pencil so drolly; and when you were to cut it, you cut it just as if you were using a pruning knife to your vines; but now it is your turn to laugh, for you surpass us all. And the times are changed, since I set about to explain this rule of mine to you.'

'Aye, that rule,' said Francisco, 'how much I owe to it. Some great people, when they lose any of their fine things, cause the crier to promise a reward of so much money to whoever shall find and restore their trinket; how richly have you and your father rewarded me for returning this rule!'

Francisco's modesty and gratitude, as they were perfectly sincere, attached his friends to him most powerfully; but there was one person who regretted our hero's frequent absences from his vineyard at Resina. Not Francisco's father, for he was well satisfied his son never neglected his business; and as to the hours spent in Naples, he had so much confidence in Francisco, that he felt no apprehensions of his getting into bad company. When his son

had once said to him, 'I spend my time at such a place, and in such and such a manner,' he was as well convinced of its being so, as if he had watched and seen him every moment of the day. But it was Arthur who complained of Francisco's absence. 'I see, because I am an Englishman,' said he, 'you don't value my friendship, and yet that is the very reason you ought to value it; no friends so good as the English—be it spoken without offence to your Italian friend, for whom you now continually leave me to dodge up and down here in Resina, without a soul that I like to speak to, for you are the only Italian I ever liked.'

'You *shall* like another, I promise you,' said Francisco, 'you must come with me to Carlo's, and see how I spend my evenings, then complain of me if you can.'

It was the utmost stretch of Arthur's complaisance to pay this visit, but in spite of his national prejudices, and habitual reserve of temper, he was pleased with the reception he met with from the generous Carlo, and the playful Rosetta. They shewed him Francisco's drawings with enthusiastic eagerness; and Arthur, though no great judge of drawing, was in astonishment, and frequently repeated, 'I know a gentleman

who visits my master, who would like these things. I wish I might have them to shew him.'

'Take them then,' said Carlo, 'I wish all Naples could see them, provided they might be liked half as well as I like them.'

Arthur carried off the drawings, and one day when his master was better than usual, and when he was at leisure, eating a dessert of Francisco's grapes, he entered respectfully, with his little port-folio under his arm, and begged permission to shew his master a few drawings, done by the gardener's son, whose grapes he was eating. Though not quite so partial a judge as the enthusiastic Carlo, this gentleman was both pleased and surprised at the sight of these drawings, considering how short a time Francisco had applied himself to this art, and what slight instructions he had received. Arthur was desired to summon the young artist. Francisco's honest, open manner, joined to the proofs he had given of his abilities, and the character Arthur gave him for strict honesty, and constant kindness to his parents, interested Mr. L—, this English gentleman, much in his favour. Mr. L— was at this time in treaty with an Italian painter, whom he wished to engage to copy for him exactly

some of the cornices, mouldings, tablets, and antique ornaments, which are to be seen amongst the ruins of the ancient city of Herculaneum.*

* We must give those of our young English readers who may not be acquainted with the ancient city of Herculaneum, some idea of it. None can be ignorant, that near Naples is the celebrated volcanic mountain of Vesuvius; that, from time to time, there happen violent eruptions from this mountain, that is to say flames and immense clouds of smoke issue from different openings, mouths, or *craters*, as they are called, but more especially from the summit of the mountain, which is distinguished by the name of *the* crater. A rumbling, and afterwards a roaring noise is heard within, and prodigious quantities of stones, and minerals burnt into masses (scoriæ) are thrown out of the crater, sometimes to a great distance. The hot ashes from Mount Vesuvius have often been seen upon the roofs of the houses of Naples, from which it is six miles distant. Streams of lava run down the sides of the mountain during the time of an eruption, destroying every thing in their way, and overwhelm the houses and vineyards which are in the neighbourhood. About 1700 years ago, during the reign of the Roman emperor Titus, there happened a terrible eruption of mount Vesuvius; and a large city called Herculaneum, which was situated at about four miles distant from the volcano, was overwhelmed by the streams of lava, which poured into it, filled up the streets, and quickly covered over the tops of the houses, so that the whole was no more visible. It remained for many years buried. The lava which covered it, became in time fit for vegetation, plants grew there, a new soil was formed, and a new

town called Portici, was built over the place where Herculaneum formerly stood. The little village of Resina is also situated near the spot. About fifty years ago, in a poor man's garden at Resina, a hole in a well about thirty feet below the surface of the earth was observed. Some persons had the curiosity to enter into this hole, and after creeping under ground for some time, they came to the foundations of houses. The peasants, inhabitants of the village, who had probably never heard of Herculaneum, were somewhat surprised at their discovery.* About the same time, in a pit in the town of Portici a similar passage under ground was discovered, and by orders of the king of Naples, workmen were employed to dig away the earth, and clear the passages. They found, at length, the entrance into the town, which, during the reign of Titus, was buried under lava. It was about eighty-eight Neapolitan palms (a palm contains near nine inches) below the top of the pit. The workmen, as they cleared the passages, marked their way with chalk, when they came to any turning, lest they should lose themselves. The streets branched out in many directions, and lying across them, the workmen often found large pieces of timber, beams and rafters; some broken in the fall, others entire. These beams and rafters are burned quite black, and look like charcoal, except those that were found in moist places, which have more the colour of rotten wood, and which are like a soft paste, into which you might run your hand. The walls of the houses slant, some one way, some another, and some are upright. Several magnificent buildings of brick, faced with marble of different colours, are partly seen, where the workmen have cleared away the earth and lava, with which they were

* Philosophical Transactions, 9th Vol. page 440.

encrusted. Columns of red and white marble, and flights of marble steps, are seen in different places. And out of the ruins of the palaces, some very fine statues and pictures have been dug. Foreigners who visit Naples are extremely curious to see this subterraneous city, and are desirous to carry with them into their own country some proofs of their having examined this wonderful place.

THE LITTLE MERCHANTS.

CHAPTER III.

Tutte le gran facende si fanno di poca colla.
Great things hang upon small wires.

SIGNOR Camillo, the artist employed by Mr. L— to copy some of the antique ornaments in Herculaneum, was a liberal minded man, perfectly free from that mean jealousy, which would repress the effects of rising genius. 'Here is a lad of scarcely fifteen, a poor gardener's son, who, with merely the instructions he could obtain from a common carpenter, has learned to draw these plans and elevations, which you see are tolerably neat. What an advantage your instructions would be to him,' said Mr. L—, as he introduced Francisco to Signor Camillo. 'I am interested for this lad, from what I have learned of his good conduct: I hear he is strictly honest,

and one of the best of sons; let us do something for him; if you will give him some knowledge of your art, I will, as far as money can recompense you for your loss of time, pay whatever you may think reasonable for his instructions.' Signor Camillo made no difficulties, he was pleased with his pupil's appearance, and every day he liked him better and better. In the room where they worked together, there were some large books of drawings and plates, which Francisco saw now and then opened by his master, and which he had a great desire to look over; but when he was left in the room by himself, he never touched them, because he had not permission. Signor Camillo, the first day he came into this room with his pupil, said to him, 'Here are many valuable books and drawings, young man; I trust, from the character I have heard of you, that they will be perfectly safe here.'

Some weeks after Francisco had been with the painter, they had occasion to look for the front of a temple in one of these large books. 'What! don't you know in which book to look for it, Francisco?' cried his master with some impatience. 'Is it possible that you have been here so long

with these books, and that you cannot find the print I mean? Had you half the taste I gave you credit for, you would have singled it out from all the rest, and have it fixed in your memory.'

'But, signor, I never saw it,' said Francisco, respectfully, 'or, perhaps, I should have preferred it.'

'That you never saw it, young man, is the very thing of which I complain. Is a taste for the arts to be learned, think you, by looking at the cover of a book like this? Is it possible that you never thought of opening it?'

'Often, and often,' cried Francisco, 'have I longed to open it, but I thought it was forbidden me; and however great my curiosity in your absence, I have never touched them. I hoped indeed, that the time would come, when you would have the goodness to shew them to me.'

'And so it is come, excellent young man,' cried Camillo; 'much as I love taste, I love integrity more; I am now sure of your having the one, and let me see whether you have, as I believe you have, the other. Sit you down here beside me, and we will look over these books together.'

The attention with which his young pupil examined every thing, and the pleasure he

unaffectedly expressed in seeing these excellent prints, sufficiently convinced his judicious master that it was not from the want of curiosity or taste, that he had never opened these tempting volumes. His confidence in Francisco was much increased by this circumstance, slight as it may appear. One day Signor Camillo came behind Francisco, as he was drawing with much intentness, and tapping him upon the shoulder, he said to him: 'put up your pencils, and follow me; I can depend upon your integrity, I have pledged myself for it. Bring your note book with you, and follow me; I will this day shew you something, that will entertain you at least as much as my large book of prints. Follow me.'

Francisco followed, till they came to the pit near the entrance of Herculaneum. 'I have obtained leave for you to accompany me,' said his master, 'and you know, I suppose, that this is not a permission granted to every one.' Paintings of great value, besides ornaments of gold and silver, antique bracelets, rings, &c. are from time to time found amongst these ruins, and therefore it is necessary that no person should be admitted, whose honesty cannot be depended upon. Even Francisco's talents could not

have advanced him in the world, we may remark, unless they had been united to integrity. He was much delighted and astonished by the new scene that was now opened to his view, and as he, day after day, accompanied his master to this subterraneous city, he had leisure for observation. He was employed, as soon as he had gratified his curiosity, in drawing. There are niches in the walls in several places, from which pictures have been dug, and these niches are often adorned with elegant masques, figures and animals, which have been left by the ignorant or careless workmen, and which are going fast to destruction. Signor Camillo, who was copying these for his English employer, had a mind to try his pupil's skill, and pointing to a niche bordered with grotesque figures, he desired him to try, if he could make any hand of it. Francisco made several trials, and at last finished such an excellent copy, that his enthusiastic and generous master, with warm encomiums, carried it immediately to his patron, and he had the pleasure to receive from Mr. L— a purse containing five guineas, as a reward and encouragement for his pupil. Francisco had no sooner received this money, than he hurried home to his father and mother's

cottage. His mother, some months before this time, had taken a small dairy farm, and her son had once heard her express a wish that she was but rich enough to purchase a remarkably fine brinded cow, which belonged to a farmer in the neighbourhood. 'Here, my dear mother,' cried Francisco, pouring the guineas into her lap, 'and here,' continued he, emptying a bag, which contained about as much more, in small Italian coins, the profits of trade, money he had fairly earned during the two years he sold fruit amongst the little Neapolitan merchants; 'this is all yours, dearest mother, and I hope it will be enough to pay for the brinded cow. Nay, you must not refuse me—I have set my heart upon that cow's being milked by you this very evening; and I'll produce my best bunches of grapes, and my father, perhaps, will give us a melon, for I've had no time for melons this season, and I'll step to Naples, and invite——may I, mother?—my good friends, dear Carlo, and your favourite little Rosetta, and my old drawing master, and my friend Arthur, and we'll sup with you at your dairy.'

The happy mother thanked her son, and the father assured him that neither melon, nor pine-apple should be spared, to make a

supper worthy of his friends. The brinded cow was bought, and Arthur, and Carlo, and Rosetta, most joyfully accepted their invitation. The carpenter had unluckily appointed to settle a long account that day with one of his employers, and he could not accompany his children. It was a delicious evening; they left Naples just as the sea breeze, after the heat of the day, was most refreshingly felt. The walk to Resina, the vineyard, the dairy, and most of all, the brinded cow, were praised by Carlo and Rosetta, with all the Italian superlatives which signify, 'most beautiful! most delightful! most charming!' whilst the English Arthur, with as warm a heart, was more temperate in his praise, declaring, that this was 'the most like an English summer's evening of any he had ever felt since he came to Italy: and that, moreover, the cream was almost as good as what he had been used to drink in Cheshire.' The company, who were all pleased with each other, and with the gardener's good fruit, which he produced in great abundance, did not think of separating till late. It was a bright moon-light night, and Carlo asked his friend if he would walk with them part of the way to Naples. 'Yes, all the way,

most willingly,' cried Francisco, 'that I may have the pleasure of giving to your father, with my own hands, this fine bunch of grapes, that I have reserved for him out of my own share.'

'Add this fine pine-apple for my share, then,' said his father, 'and a pleasant walk to you, my young friends.'

They proceeded gaily along, and when they reached Naples, as they passed through the square where the little merchants held their market, Francisco pointed to the spot where he found Carlo's rule: he never missed an opportunity of shewing his friends that he did not forget their former kindness to him. 'That rule,' said he, 'has been the cause of all my present happiness, and I thank you for——'

'Oh, never mind thanking him now,' interrupted Rosetta, 'but look yonder, and tell me what all those people are about.' She pointed to a groupe of men, women, and children, who were assembled under a piazza, listening, in various attitudes of attention, to a man who was standing upon a flight of steps, speaking in a loud voice, and with much action, to the people who surrounded him. Francisco, Carlo, and Rosetta joined his audience. The moon shone

full upon his countenance, which was very expressive, and which varied frequently according to the characters of the persons whose history he was telling, and according to all the changes of their fortune. This man was one of those who are called Improvisatori—persons, who in Italian towns, go about reciting verses, or telling stories, which they are supposed to invent as they go on speaking. Some of these people speak with great oratory, and collect crowds round them in the publick streets. When he sees the attention of his audience fixed, and when he comes to some very interesting part of his narrative, the dexterous improvisatore drops his hat upon the ground, and pauses till his auditors have paid their tribute to his eloquence. When he thinks the hat sufficiently full, he takes it up again, and proceeds with his story. The hat was dropped just as Francisco and his two friends came under the piazza; the orator had finished one story, and was going to commence another. He fixed his eyes upon Francisco, then glanced at Carlo and Rosetta, and after a moment's consideration, he began a story, which bore some resemblance to one that our young English readers may, perhaps, know by the name of 'Cornaro, or the

Grateful Turk.' Francisco was deeply interested in this narrative, and when the hat was dropped, he eagerly threw in his contribution. At the end of the story, when the speaker's voice stopped, there was a momentary silence, which was broken by the orator himself, who exclaimed, as he took up the hat which lay at his feet, 'My friends, here is some mistake! this is not my hat; it has been changed whilst I was taken up with my story; pray, gentlemen, find my hat amongst you, it was a remarkably good one, a present from a nobleman for an epigram I made. I would not lose my hat for twice its value; pray, gentlemen—it has my name written within side of it, Dominicho Improvisatore. Pray, gentlemen, examine your hats.'

Every body present examined their hats, and shewed them to Dominicho, but his was not amongst them. No one had left the company; the piazza was cleared, and searched in vain. 'The hat has vanished by magic,' said Dominicho.

'Yes, and by the same magic a statue moves,' cried Carlo, pointing to a figure standing in a niche, which had hitherto escaped observation. The face was so much in the shade, that Carlo did not at first

perceive that the statue was Piedro. Piedro, when he saw himself discovered, burst into a loud laugh, and, throwing down Dominicho's hat, which he held in his hand behind him, cried, 'A pretty set of novices! most excellent players at hide and seek you would make.' Whether Piedro really meant to have carried off the poor man's hat, or whether he was, as he said, merely in jest, we leave it to those who know his general character to decide. Carlo shook his head. 'Still at your old tricks, Piedro,' said he. 'Remember the old proverb: No fox so cunning but he comes to the furrier's at last.'*

'I defy the furrier and you too,' replied Piedro, taking up his own ragged hat. 'I have no need to steal hats, I can afford to buy better than you'll have upon your head. Francisco a word with you, if you have done crying at the pitiful story you have been listening to so attentively.'

'And what would you say to me?' said Francisco, following him a few steps. 'Do not detain me long, because my friends will wait for me.'

'If they are friends they can wait,' said Piedro, 'You need not be ashamed of

* Tutti le volpi si trovano in pellicera.

being seen in my company now, I can tell you, for I am, as I always told you I should be, the richest man of the two.'

'Rich! You rich!' cried Francisco; 'Well, then, it was impossible you could mean to trick that poor man out of his good hat.'

'Impossible!' said Piedro. Francisco did not consider that those who have habits of pilfering, continue to practise them often when the poverty, which first tempted them to dishonesty, ceases. 'Impossible! You stare when I tell you I am rich, but the thing is so; moreover, I am well with my father at home. I have friends in Naples, and I call myself Piedro the Lucky. Look you here,' said he, producing an old gold coin; 'this does not smell of fish does it? My father is no longer a fisherman, nor I neither. Neither do I sell sugar-plums to children; nor do I slave myself in a vineyard, like some folks; but fortune, when I least expected it, has stood my friend. I have many pieces of gold like this. Digging in my father's garden, it was my luck to come to an old Roman vessel full of gold. I have this day agreed for a house in Naples for my father. We shall live, whilst we can afford it, like great folks, you will

see, and I shall enjoy the envy that will be felt by some of my old friends, the little Neapolitan merchants, who will change their note when they see my change of fortune. What say you to all this, Francisco the Honest?'

'That I wish you joy of your prosperity, and hope you may enjoy it long and well.'

'Well! no doubt of that, every one who has it enjoys it *well*. He always dances well to whom fortune pipes.'*

'Yes, but no longer pipe no longer dance,' replied Francisco, and here they parted; for Piedro walked away abruptly, much mortified to perceive that his prosperity did not excite much envy, or command any additional respect from Francisco.

'I would rather,' said Francisco, when he returned to Carlo and Rosetta, who waited for him under the portico where he left them, 'I would rather have such good friends as you, Carlo and Arthur, and some more I could name, and, besides that, have a clear conscience, and work honestly for my bread, than be as lucky as Piedro. Do you know, he has found a treasure, he says, in

* Assai ben balla a chi fortuna suona.

his father's garden, a vase full of gold; he shewed me one of the gold pieces.'

'Much good may they do him; I hope he came honestly by them,' said Carlo; 'but ever since the affair of the double measure, I suspect double dealing always from him. It is not our affair, however, let him make himself happy his way, and we ours.

He that would live in peace and rest,
Must hear, and see, and say the best.'*

All Piedro's neighbours did not follow this peaceable maxim; for when he and his father began to circulate the story of the treasure found in the garden, the village of Resina did not give them implicit faith. People nodded, and whispered, and shrugged their shoulders; then crossed themselves, and declared, that they would not for all the riches in Naples change places with either Piedro or his father. Regardless, or pretending to be regardless, of these suspicions, Piedro and his father persisted in their assertions. The fishing nets were sold, and every thing in their cottage was disposed of; they left Resina, went to live at Naples,

* Ode, vede, tace, se vuoi viver in pace.

and, after a few weeks, the matter began to be almost forgotten in the village. The old gardener, Francisco's father, was one of those who endeavoured to *think the best*, and all that he said upon the subject was, that he would not exchange Francisco the Honest for Piedro the Lucky—that one can't judge of the day till one sees the evening as well as the morning.*

Not to leave our readers longer in suspense, we must inform them, that the peasants of Resina were right in their suspicions. Piedro had never found any treasure in his father's garden, but he came by his gold in the following manner: after he was banished from the little wood market for stealing Rosetta's basket full of wood, after he had cheated the poor woman who let glasses out to hire, out of the value of the glasses which he broke, and in short, after he had entirely lost his credit with all who knew him, he roamed about the streets of Naples, reckless of what became of him. He found the truth of the proverb, that 'credit lost is like a Venice glass broke—it can't be mended again.' The few shillings

* La vita il fine,—e'l di loda la sera.
'Compute the morn and evening of their day.'
POPE.

which he had in his pocket, supplied him with food for a few days; at last he was glad to be employed by one of the peasants who came to Naples to load their asses with manure out of the streets. They often follow, very early in the morning, or during the night time, the track of carriages that are gone, or that are returning from the opera; and Piedro was one night at this work, when the horses of a nobleman's carriage took fright at the sudden blaze of some fireworks. The carriage was overturned near him; a lady was taken out of it, and was hurried by her attendants into a shop, where she stayed till her carriage was set to rights. She was too much alarmed for the first ten minutes after her accident, to think of any thing; but, after some time, she perceived that she had lost a valuable diamond cross, which she had worn that night at the opera: she was uncertain where she had dropped it; the shop, the carriage, the street were searched for it in vain. Piedro saw it fall as the lady was lifted out of the carriage, seized upon it, and carried it off. Ignorant as he was of the full value of what he had stolen, he knew not how to satisfy himself as to this point, without trusting some one with the secret. After some hesitation, he

determined to apply to a jew, who, as it was whispered, was ready to buy every thing that was offered to him for sale, without making any *troublesome* inquiries. It was late; he waited till the streets were cleared, and then knocked softly at the back door of the jew's house. The person who opened the door for Piedro was his own father. Piedro started back, but his father had fast hold of him.

'What brings you here?' said the father, in a low voice; a voice which expressed fear and rage mixed.

'By St. Nicholas, only to ask my way, my shortest way,' stammered Piedro.

'No equivocations! Tell me what brings you here at this time of night? I *will* know.'

Piedro who felt himself in his father's grasp, and who knew that his father would certainly search him, to find out what he had brought to sell, thought it most prudent to produce the diamond cross. His father could but just see its lustre by the light of a dim lamp, which hung over their heads in the gloomy passage in which they stood.

'You would have been duped if you had gone to sell this to the jew; it is well it has fallen into my hands. How came you by

it?' Piedro answered that he had found it in the street.

'Go your ways home, then,' said his father; 'it is safe with me, concern yourself no more about it.'

Piedro was not inclined thus to relinquish his booty; and he now thought proper to vary in his account of the manner in which he found the cross. He now confessed that it had dropped from the dress of a lady, whose carriage was overturned, as she was coming home from the opera; and he concluded by saying, that, if his father took his prize from him, without giving him his share of the profits, he would go directly to the shop where the lady stopped whilst her servants were raising the carriage, and that he would give notice of his having found the cross. Piedro's father saw, that his *smart* son, though scarcely sixteen years of age, was a match for him in villainy. He promised him, that he should have half of whatever the jew would give for the diamonds, and Piedro insisted upon being present at the transaction. We do not wish to lay open to our young readers scenes of iniquity; it is sufficient to say, that the jew, who was a man old in all the arts of villainy, contrived to cheat both his associates, and

obtained the diamond cross for less than half its value. The matter was managed so that the transaction remained undiscovered; the lady who lost the cross, after making fruitless inquiries, gave up the search, and Piedro and his father rejoiced in the success of their manœuvres. It is said, that 'Ill gotten wealth is quickly spent,'* and so it proved in this instance; both father and son lived a riotous life, as long as their money lasted, and it did not last many months. What his bad education began, bad company finished, and Piedro's mind was completely ruined by the associates with whom he became connected during what he called his *prosperity*. When his money was at an end, these unprincipled friends began to look cold upon him, and at last plainly told him, 'If you mean to *live with us*, you must *live as we do*.' They lived by robbery. Piedro, though familiarised to the idea of fraud, was shocked at the thought of becoming a robber by profession. How difficult it is to stop in the career of vice!

Whether Piedro had power to stop, or whether he was hurried on by his associates, we shall, for the present, leave in doubt.

* Vien presto consumato l'ingiustamente acquistato.

CHAPTER IV.

WE turn with pleasure from Piedro the Cunning, to Francisco the Honest. Francisco continued the happy and useful course of his life; by his unremitting perseverance, he improved himself rapidly under the instructions of his master and friend Signor Camillo. His friend, we say, for the fair and open character of Francisco won, or rather earned, the friendship of this benevolent artist. The English gentleman seemed to take a pride in our hero's success and good conduct; he was not one of those patrons who think that they have done enough when they have given five guineas. His servant, Arthur, always considered every generous action of his master's as his own, and was particularly pleased whenever this generosity was directed towards Francisco.

As for Carlo, and the little Rosetta, they were the companions of all the pleasant walks which Francisco used to take in the cool of the evening, after he had been shut up all day at his work. And the old carpenter, delighted with the gratitude of his pupil, frequently repeated, 'that he was proud to have given the first instructions to such a *genius*, and that he had always prophesied Francisco would be a *great* man.'

'And a good man, papa,' said Rosetta; 'for though he has grown so great, and though he goes into palaces now, to say nothing of that place under ground, where he has leave to go, yet, notwithstanding all this, he never forgets my brother Carlo, and you.'

'That's the way to have good friends,' said the carpenter. 'And I like his way; he does more than he says; Facts are masculine, and words are feminine.'*

These good friends seemed to make Francisco happier than Piedro could be made by his stolen diamonds.

One morning Francisco was sent to finish a sketch of the front of an ancient temple, amongst the ruins of Herculaneum; he had just reached the pit, and the men were about

* I fatti sono maschii, le parole femine.

to let him down with cords, in the usual manner, when his attention was caught by the shrill sound of a scolding woman's voice. He looked, and saw at some paces distant this female fury, who stood guarding the windlass of a well, to which, with threatening gestures, and most voluble menaces she forbade all access. The peasants—men, women, and children, who had come with their pitchers to draw water at this well, were held at bay by the enraged female; not one dared to be the first to advance; whilst she grasped with one hand the handle of the windlass, and, with the other tanned, muscular arm extended, governed the populace, bidding them remember, that she was Padrona, or mistress of the well. They retired in hopes of finding a more gentle Padrona at some other well in the neighbourhood; and the fury, when they were out of sight, divided the long black hair which hung over her face, and, turning to some of the spectators, appealed to them in a sober voice, and asked if she was not right in what she had done? 'I, that am Padrona of the well,' said she, addressing herself to Francisco, who, with great attention, was contemplating her with the eye of a painter—'I, that am Padrona of the well, must, in

times of scarcity, do strict justice, and preserve for ourselves alone the water of our well: there is scarcely enough even for ourselves. I have been obliged to make my husband lengthen the ropes every day for this week past; if things go on at this rate, there will soon be not one drop of water left in my well.'

'Nor in any of the wells in the neighbourhood,' added one of the workmen who was standing by; and he mentioned several in which the water had lately suddenly decreased; and a miller affirmed, that his mill had stopped for want of water. Francisco was struck by these remarks; they brought to his recollection similar facts, which he had often heard his father mention in his childhood, as having been observed previous to the last eruption of mount Vesuvius.* He had also heard from his father, in his childhood, that it is better to trust to prudence, than to fortune; and, therefore, though the peasants and workmen, to whom he mentioned his fears, laughed, and said, 'that as the burning mountain had been favourable to them for so many years, they would trust to it and St. Januarius one day longer,'

* Phil. Trans. Vol. IX.

vet Francisco immediately gave up all thoughts of spending this day amidst the ruins of Herculaneum. After having inquired sufficiently, after having seen several wells, in which the water had evidently decreased, and after having seen the mill wheels that were standing still for want of their usual supply, he hastened home to his father and mother, reported what he had heard and seen, and begged of them to remove, and to take what things of value they could to some distance from the dangerous spot where they now resided. Some of the inhabitants of Resina, whom he questioned, declared that they had heard strange rumbling noises under ground, and a peasant and his son, who had been at work the preceding day in a vineyard a little above the village, related, that they had seen a sudden puff of smoke come out of the earth, close to them, and that they had, at the same time, heard a noise like the going off of a a pistol.* The villagers listened with large eyes, and open ears, to these relations, yet such was their habitual attachment to the

* These facts are mentioned in Sir William Hamilton's account of the late eruption of mount Vesuvius. See Phil. Trans. 1795, 1st part.

spot they lived upon, or such their security in their own good fortune, that few of them would believe that there could be any necessity for removing. 'We'll see what will happen to-morrow; we shall be safe here one day longer,' said they. Francisco's father and mother, more prudent than the generality of their neighbours, went to the house of a relation at some miles distance from Vesuvius, and carried with them all their effects. In the mean time, Francisco went to the villa where his English friends resided; this villa was in a most dangerous situation, near Torre del Greco, a town that stands at the foot of mount Vesuvius. He related all the facts that he had heard to Arthur, who, not having been, like the inhabitants of Resina, familiarised to the idea of living in the vicinity of a burning mountain, and habituated to trust in St. Januarius, was sufficiently alarmed by Francisco's representations; he ran to his master's apartment, and communicated all that he had just heard. The count di F— and his lady, who were at this time in the house, ridiculed the fears of Arthur, and could not be prevailed upon to remove, even as far as Naples. The lady was intent upon preparations for her birth-day, which was to be

celebrated in a few days, with great magnificence, at their villa; and she observed, that it would be a pity to return to town before that day, as they had every thing arranged for the festival. The prudent Englishman had not the gallantry to appear to be convinced by these arguments, and he left this place of danger. He left it not too soon, for the next morning exhibited a scene—a scene which we shall not attempt to describe. We refer our young readers to the account Sir William Hamilton has published* of the last dreadful eruption of mount Vesuvius. It is sufficient here to say, that, in the space of about five hours, the wretched inhabitants of Torre del Greco saw their town utterly destroyed by the streams of burning lava which poured from the mountain. The villa of count di F—, with some others which were at a little distance from the town, escaped; but they were absolutely surrounded by the lava. The count and countess were obliged to fly from their house with the utmost precipitation in the night time, and they had not time to remove any of their furniture, their plate, clothes, or jewels. A few days after

* Philosophical Transactions.

the eruption, the surface of the lava became so cool, that people could walk upon it, though several feet beneath the surface it was still exceedingly hot; numbers of those who had been forced from their houses, now returned to their ruins to try to save whatever they could; but these unfortunate persons frequently found their houses had been pillaged by robbers, who in these moments of general confusion, enrich themselves with the spoils of their fellow creatures.

'Has the count abandoned his villa? And is there no one to take care of his plate and furniture? The house will certainly be ransacked before morning,' said the old carpenter to Francisco, who was at his house giving him an account of their flight. Francisco immediately went to the count's house in Naples, to warn him of his danger. The first person he saw was Arthur, who, with a face of terror, said to him, 'Do you know what has happened? It is all over with Resina!'

'All over with Resina! What, has there been a fresh eruption? Has the lava reached Resina?'

'No; but it will inevitably be blown up. There,' said Arthur, pointing to a thin

figure of an Italian, who stood pale and trembling, and looking up to heaven, as he crossed himself repeatedly—'there,' said Arthur, 'is a man, who has left a parcel of his cursed rockets and fire works, with I don't know how much gunpowder, in the count's house from which we have just fled; the wind blows that way; one spark of fire and the whole is blown up.'

Francisco waited not to hear more, but instantly, without explaining his intentions to any one, set out for the count's villa, and, with a bucket of water in his hand, crossed the beds of lava, with which the house was encompassed, reached the hall where the rockets and gunpowder were left, plunged them into the water, and returned with them in safety over the lava, yet warm under his feet. What was the surprise and joy of the poor fire-work maker, when he saw Francisco return from this dangerous expedition; he could scarcely believe his eyes, when he saw the rockets and the gunpowder all safe. The count, who had given up the hopes of saving his palace, was in admiration when he heard of this instance of intrepidity, which probably saved not only his villa, but the whole village of Resina, from destruction. These fire-works had been

prepared for the celebration of the countess's birth-day, and were forgotten in the hurry of the night, on which the inhabitants fled from Torre del Greco.

'Brave young man,' said the count to Francisco, 'I thank you, and shall not limit my gratitude to thanks. You tell me, that there is danger of my villa being pillaged by robbers; it is from this moment your interest as well as mine, to prevent their depredations; for a portion, trust to my liberality, of all that is saved of mine shall be yours.'

'Bravo! Bravissimo!' exclaimed one, who started from a recessed window in the hall where all this passed:—'Bravo! Bravissimo!' Francisco thought he knew the voice and the countenance of this man, who exclaimed with so much enthusiasm; he remembered to have seen him before, but when, or where, he could not recollect. As soon as the count left the hall, the stranger came up to Francisco; 'Is it possible,' said he, 'that you don't know me? It is scarely a twelve month since I drew tears from your eyes.'

'Tears from my eyes!' repeated Francisco smiling, 'I have shed but few tears: I have had but few misfortunes in my life.'

The stranger answered him by two extempore Italian lines, which conveyed nearly the same idea that has been so well expressed by an English poet:

> 'To each their sufferings—all are men
> 'Condemned alike to groan;
> 'The feeling, for another's woes,
> 'Th' unfeeling, for his own.'

'I know you now perfectly well,' cried Francisco; 'you are the improvisatore who, one fine moon-light night last summer, told us the story of Cornaro the Turk.'

'The same,' said the improvisatore; 'the same, though in a better dress, which I should not have thought would have made so much difference in your eyes, though it makes all the difference between man and man in the eyes of the stupid vulgar. My genius has broken through the clouds of misfortune of late; a few happy impromptu verses I made on the count di F—'s fall from his horse attracted attention. The count patronises me; I am here now to learn the fate of an ode I have just composed for his lady's birth-day; my ode was to have been set to music, and to have been

performed at his villa near Torre del Greco, if these troubles had not intervened. Now, that the mountain is quiet again, people will return to their senses; I expect to be munificently rewarded. But, perhaps, I detain you. Go: I shall not forget to celebrate the heroic action you have performed this day. I still amuse myself amongst the populace in my tattered garb late in the evenings, and I shall sound your praises through Naples in a poem I mean to recite on the late eruption of mount Vesuvius. Adieu.'

The improvisatore was as good as his word; that evening, with more than his usual enthusiasm, he recited his verses to a great crowd of people in one of the publick squares. Amongst the crowd were several to whom the name of Francisco was well known, and by whom he was well beloved. These were his young companions, who remembered him as a fruit-seller amongst the little merchants. They rejoiced to hear his praises, and repeated the lines, with shouts of applause.

'Let us pass. What is all this disturbance in the streets?' said a man pushing his way through the crowd; a lad, who held by his arm, stopped suddenly on hearing

the name of Francisco, which the people were repeating with so much enthusiasm. 'Ha! I have found at last a story that interests you more than that of Cornaro the Turk,' cried the improvisatore, looking in the face of the youth who had stopped so suddenly. 'You are the young man, who, last summer, had liked to have tricked me out of my new hat. Promise me you won't touch it now,' said he, throwing down the hat at his feet, 'or you hear not one word I have to say. Not one word of the heroic action performed at the villa of the count di F—, near Torre del Greco, this morning, by Signor Francisco.'

'*Signor* Francisco!' repeated the lad, with disdain; 'well, let us hear what you have to tell of him,' added he. 'Your hat is very safe I promise you; I shall not touch it. What of *Signor* Francisco?'

'*Signor* Francisco I may, without impropriety, call him,' said the improvisatore, 'for he is likely to become rich enough to command the title from those, who might not otherwise respect his merit.'

'Likely to become rich! how?' said the lad; whom our readers have probably before this time discovered to be Pietro;

'how, pray, is he likely to become rich enough to be a signor?'

'The count di F— has promised him a liberal portion of all the fine furniture, plate, and jewels, that can be saved from his villa at Torre del Greco. Francisco is gone down thither now with some of the count's domestics, to protect the valuable goods against those villainous plunderers, who rob their fellow creatures of what even the flames of Vesuvius would spare.'

'Come, we have had enough of this stuff,' cried the man whose arm Piedro held. 'Come away,' and he hurried forwards.

This man was one of the villains against whom the honest orator expressed such indignation. He was one of those with whom Piedro got acquainted during the time that he was living extravagantly upon the money he gained by the sale of the stolen diamond cross. That robbery was not discovered, and his *success*, as he called it, hardened him in guilt; he was both unwilling and unable to withdraw himself from the bad company, with whom his ill gotten wealth connected him. He did not consider, that bad company leads to the gallows.*

* La mala compagnia è 'quella che mena huomini a la furca.

The universal confusion which followed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, was, to these villains, a time of rejoicing. No sooner was any wealthy house known to be forsaken by the possessors, than it was infested by these robbers. No sooner did Piedro's companions hear of the rich furniture, plate, &c. which the imprudent orator had described as belonging to the count di F—'s villa, than he longed to make himself master of the whole.

'It is a pity,' said Piedro, 'that the count has sent Francisco, with his servants, down to guard it.'

'And who is this Francisco, of whom you seem to stand in such awe?'

'A boy, a young lad only, of about my own age, but I know him to be sturdily honest; the servants we might corrupt, but even the old proverb of 'angle with a silver hook,'* won't hold good with him.'

'And if he cannot be won with fair means, he must be conquered by foul,' said the desperate villain; 'but if we offer him rather more than the count has already promised, for his share of the booty, of course

* Peschár col hamo d'argento.

he will consult at once his safety and his interest.'

'No,' said Piedro, 'that is not his nature; I know him from a child, and we had better think of some other house for to-night's business.'

'None other; none but this,' cried his companion with an oath. 'My mind is determined upon this, and you must obey your leader; recollect the fate of him who failed me yesterday.'

The person to whom he alluded, was one of the gang of robbers, who had been assassinated by his companions, for hesitating to commit some crime suggested by their leader. No tyranny is so dreadful as that which is exercised by villains over their young accomplices, who become their slaves. Piedro, who was of a cowardly nature, trembled at the threatening countenance of his captain, and promised submission. In the course of the morning enquiries were made secretly amongst the count's servants; and the two men, who were engaged to sit up at the villa that night along with Francisco, were bribed to second the views of this gang of thieves. It was agreed, that about midnight the robbers should be let into the house; that Francisco should be

tied hand and foot, whilst they carried off their booty. 'He is a stubborn chap, though so young, I understand,' said the captain of the robbers to his men; 'but we carry poinards and know how to use them. Piedro, you look pale, you don't require to be reminded of what I said to you, when we were alone just now?'

Piedro's voice failed, and some of his comrades observed, that he was young and new to the business. The captain, who, from being his pretended friend during his wealthy days, had of late become his tyrant, cast a stern look at Piedro, and bid him be sure to be at the old jew's, which was the place of meeting, in the dusk of the evening; after saying this he departed. Piedro, when he was alone, tried to collect his thoughts—all his thoughts were full of horror. 'Where am I?' said he to himself; 'what am I about? Did I understand rightly what he said about poinards? Francisco; Oh! Francisco! Excellent, kind, generous Francisco! Yes, I recollect your look when you held the bunch of grapes to my lips as I sat by the sea shore deserted by all the world; and now, what friends have I? Robbers and—' the word *murderers* he could not utter; he again recollected what had been

said about poinards, and the longer his mind fixed upon the words, and the look that accompanied them, the more he was shocked. He could not doubt, but that it was the serious intention of his accomplices to murder Francisco, if he should make any resistance. Piedro had at this moment no friend in the world, to whom he could apply for advice or assistance: his wretched father died some weeks before this time in a fit of intoxication. Piedro walked up and down the street, scarcely capable of thinking, much less of coming to any rational resolution: the hours passed away, the shadows of the houses lengthened under his footsteps; the evening came on, and when it grew dusk, after hesitating in great agony of mind for some time, his fear of the robber's vengeance prevailed over every other feeling, and he went at the appointed hour to the place of meeting. The place of meeting was at the house of that jew, to whom he, several months before, sold the diamond cross—that cross, which he thought himself so lucky to have stolen, and to have disposed of undetected, was, in fact, the cause of his being in his present dreadful situation. It was at the jew's that he connected himself with this gang of robbers, to whom he was now become an

absolute slave. ‘ O that I dared to disobey !’ said he to himself with a deep sigh, as he knocked softly at the back door of the jew’s house. The back door opened into a narrow, unfrequented street, and some small rooms at this side of the house were set apart for the reception of guests who desired to have their business kept secret. These rooms were separated by a dark passage from the rest of the house, and numbers of people came to the shop in the front of the house, which looked into a creditable street, without knowing any thing more from the ostensible appearance of the shop, than that it was a kind of pawnbroker’s, where old clothes, old iron, and all sorts of refuse goods, might be disposed of conveniently. At the moment Piedro knocked at the back door, the front shop was full of customers ; and the jew’s boy, whose office it was to attend to these signals, let Piedro in, told him that none of his comrades were yet come, and left him in a room by himself. He was pale and trembling, and felt a cold dew spread over him : he had a leaden image of Saint Januarius tied round his neck, which, in the midst of his wickedness, he superstitiously preserved as a sort of charm ;

and on this he kept his eyes stupidly fixed, as he sat alone in this gloomy place. He listened from time to time, but he heard no noise at the side of the house where he was. His accomplices did not arrive, and, in a sort of impatient terror, the attendant upon an evil conscience, he flung open the door of his cell, and groped his way through the dark passage which he knew led to the publick shop ; he longed to hear some noise, and to mix with the living. The jew, when Piedro entered the shop, was bargaining with a poor, thin looking man, about some gun-powder.

'I don't deny that it has been wet,' said the man! 'but since it was in the bucket of water, it has been carefully dried. I tell you the simple truth ; so soon after the grand eruption of Mount Vesuvius, the people of Naples will not taste fire-works. My poor little rockets, and even my catharine's-wheel will have no effect—I am glad to part with all I have in this line of business. A few days ago I had fine things in readiness for the countess di F's birth-day, which was to have been celebrated at the count's villa.'

'Why do you fix your eyes on me friend? what is your discourse to me?' said Piedro, who imagined that the man fixed his

eyes upon him as he mentioned the name of the count's villa.

'I did not know that I fixed my eyes upon you, I was thinking of my fire-works,' said the poor man simply; 'but now that I do look at you, and hear your voice, I recollect having had the pleasure of seeing you before.'

'When? where?' said Piedro.

'A great while ago, no wonder you have forgotten me,' said the man; 'but I can recall the night to your recollection—you were in the street with me the night I let off that unlucky rocket, which frightened the horses, and was the cause of overturning a lady's coach. Don't you remember the circumstance?'

'I have a confused recollection of some such thing,' said Piedro, in great embarrassment; and he looked suspiciously at this man, in doubt whether he was cunning and wanted to sound him, or whether he was so simple as he appeared.

'You did not perhaps hear then,' continued the man, 'that there was a great search made, after the overturn, for a fine diamond cross, belonging to the lady in the carriage; that lady, though I did not know it till lately, was the Countess di F.'

'I know nothing of the matter,' interrupted Piedro, in great agitation. His confusion was so marked, that the fire-work maker could not avoid taking notice of it, and a silence of some moments ensued. The jew, more practised in dissimulation than Piedro, endeavoured to turn the man's attention back to his rockets and his gun-powder—agreed to take the gun-powder—paid for it in haste, and was, though apparently unconcerned, eager to get rid of him. But this was not so easily done; the man's curiosity was excited, and his suspicions of Piedro were increased every moment by all the dark changes of his countenance. Piedro, overpowered with the sense of guilt, surprised at the unexpected mention of the diamond cross, and of the Count di F's villa, stood like one convicted, and seemed fixed to the spot, without power of motion.

'I want to look at the old cambric that you said you had—that would do for making—that you could let me have cheap for artificial flowers,' said the fire-work maker to the jew; and as he spoke, his eye from time to time looked towards Piedro. Piedro felt for the leaden image of the saint, which he wore round his neck; the string which held it cracked, and broke with the

pull he gave it. This slight circumstance affected his terrified and superstitious mind more than all the rest. He imagined that at this moment his fate was decided; that Saint Januarius deserted him, and that he was undone. He precipitately followed the poor fire-work man the instant he left the shop, and seizing hold of his arm, whispered, 'I must speak to you.'

'Speak then,' said the man, astonished.

'Not here—this way,' said he, drawing him to[illegible]'s the dark passage; 'what I have to s[illegible] must not be overheard. You are going to the Count di F's, are not you?'

'I am,' said the man. He was going there to speak to the countess about some artificial flowers; but Piedro, thought he was going to speak to her about the diamond cross.

'You are going to give information against me? Nay, hear me; I confess that I purloined that diamond cross; but I can do the count a great service, upon condition that he pardons me. His villa is to be attacked this night by four well armed men; they will set out five hours hence; I am compelled, under the threat of assassination, to accompany them, but I shall do no more.

I throw myself upon the count's mercy. Hasten to him—we have no time to lose.'

The poor man, who heard this confession, escaped from Piedro the moment he loosed his arm. With all possible expedition he ran to the count's palace in Naples, and related to him all that had been said by Piedro. Some of the count's servants, on whom he could most depend, were at a distant part of the city attending their mistress; but the English gentleman offered the services of his man Arthur. Arthur no sooner heard the business, and understood that Francisco was in danger, than he armed himself without saying one word, saddled his English horse, and was ready to depart before any one else had finished their exclamations and conjectures. 'But we are not to set out yet, it is but four miles to Torre del Greco; the sbirri (officers of justice) are summoned—they are to go with us—we must wait for them.' They waited, much against Arthur's inclination, a considerable time for these sbirri. At length they set out, and, just as they reached the villa, the flash of a pistol was seen from one of the apartments in the house. The robbers were there; this pistol was snapped by their captain at poor Francisco, who had bravely asserted, that he

would, as long as he had life, defend the property committed to his care. The pistol missed fire, for it was charged with some of the damaged powder which the jew had bought that evening from the fire-work maker, and which he had sold as excellent, immediately afterwards, to his favorite customers, the robbers, who met at his house. Arthur, as soon as he perceived the flash of the piece, pressed forward through all the apartments, followed by the count's servants and the officers of justice; at the appearance, the sudden appearance, of so many armed men, the robbers stood dismayed. Arthur eagerly shook Francisco's hand, congratulating him upon his safety, and did not perceive, till he had given him several rough, friendly shakes, that his arm was wounded, and that he was pale with the loss of blood. 'It is not much, only a slight wound,' said Francisco; 'one that I should have escaped, if I had been upon my guard; but the sight of a face I little expected to see in such company took from me all presence of mind; and one of the ruffians stabbed me here in the arm, whilst I stood in stupid astonishment.'

'Oh! take me to prison! take me to prison! I am weary of life—I am a wretch

not fit to live,' cried Piedro, holding his hands to be tied by the sbirri.

He was taken to prison the next morning; and as he passed through the streets of Naples, he was met by several of those who had known him when he was a child. 'Aye,' said they, as he went by, 'his father encouraged him in cheating when he was *but a child;* and see what he is come to now he is a man.' He was ordered to remain twelve months in solitary confinement. His captain and his accomplices were sent to the gallies, and the jew was banished from Naples. And now, having gotten these villains out of our way, let us return to honest Francisco. His wound was soon healed. Arthur was no bad surgeon, for he let his patient get well as fast as he pleased; and Carlo and Rosetta nursed him with so much kindness, that he was almost sorry to find himself perfectly recovered.

'Now that you are able to go out,' said Francisco's father to him, 'you must come and look at my new house, my dear son.'

'Your new house, father?'

'Yes, son, and a charming one it is, and a handsome piece of land near it—all at a safe distance too from Mount Vesuvius;

and can you guess how I came by it? It was given to me for having a good son.'

'Yes,' cried Carlo, 'the inhabitants of Resina, and several who had property near Torre del Greco, and whose houses and lives were saved by your intrepidity in carrying the materials for the fire-works and the gun-powder out of this dangerous place, went in a body to the duke, and requested that he would mention your name and these facts to the king, who, amongst the grants he has made to the sufferers by the late eruption of Mount Vesuvius, has been pleased to say, that he gives this house and garden to your father, because you have saved the property and lives of many of his subjects.'

The value of a handsome portion of the furniture, plate, &c. in the Count di F's villa, was, according to the count's promise, given to him; and this money he divided between his own family and that of the good carpenter, who first put a pencil into his hands. Arthur would not accept of any present from him. To Mr. L——, the English gentleman, he offered one of his own drawings—a fruit piece.

'I like this very well,' said Arthur, as he examined the drawing; 'but I should like this melon better if it was a little bruised. It

is now three years ago since I was going to buy that bruised melon from you; you shewed me your honest nature then, though you were but a boy, and I have found you the same ever since. A good beginning makes a good ending—an honest boy will make an honest man, and honesty is the best policy, as you have proved to all who wanted the proof, I hope.'

'Yes,' added Francisco's father, 'I think it is pretty plain, that Piedro the cunning has not managed quite so well as Francisco the honest.'

OLD POZ.

LUCY, *daughter to the justice.*
Mrs. BUSTLE, *landlady of the Saracen's Head.*

JUSTICE HEADSTRONG.
OLD MAN.
WILLIAM, *a servant.*

SCENE I.

The house of Justice Headstrong—a hall. Lucy watering some myrtles—a servant behind the scenes is heard to say—

I tell you my master is not up—you can't see him—so go about your business, I say.

Lucy. Whom are you speaking to William? who's that?

Will. Only an old man, miss, with a complaint for my master.

Lucy. Oh then don't send him away—don't send him away.

Will. But master has not had his chocolate, ma'am. He won't see any body ever, before he drinks his chocolate, you know, ma'am.

Lucy. But let the old man then come in here; perhaps he can wait a little while—call him. [*Exit servant.*

(Lucy sings, and goes on watering her myrtles—the servant shews in the old man.)

Will. You can't see my master this hour, but miss will let you stay here.

Lucy. (aside) Poor old man, how he trembles as he walks. *(aloud)* Sit down, sit down, my father will see you soon; pray sit down.

(He hesitates, she pushes a chair towards him.)

Lucy. Pray sit down.

(He sits down.)

Old M. You are very good miss, very good.

(Lucy goes to her myrtles again.)

Lucy. Ah! I'm afraid this poor myrtle is quite dead—quite dead.

(The old man sighs, and she turns round.)

Lucy. (aside) I wonder what can make him sigh so! *(aloud)* My father won't make you wait long.

Old M. O ma'am, as long as he pleases—I'm in no haste—no haste—it's only a small matter.

Lucy. But does a small matter make you sigh so?

Old M. Ah miss, because, though it is a small matter in itself, it is not a small matter to me; *(sighing again)* it was my all, and I've lost it.

Lucy. What do you mean? What have you lost?

Old M. Why, miss—but I won't trouble you about it.

Lucy. But it won't trouble me at all—I mean, I wish to hear it; so tell it me.

Old M. Why miss, I slept last night at the inn here, in town—the Saracen's Head——

Lucy. (interrupts him) Hark, there is my father coming down stairs; follow me—you may tell me your story as we go along.

Old M. I slept at the Saracen's Head miss, and—— [*Exit talking.*

SCENE II.

JUSTICE HEADSTRONG'S STUDY.

(He appears in his night-gown and cap, with his gouty foot upon a stool—a table and chocolate beside him. Lucy is leaning on the arm of his chair.)

Just. Well, well, my darling, presently—I'll see him presently.

Lucy. Whilst you are drinking your chocolate, papa?

Just. No, no, no—I never see any body till I have done my chocolate, darling. *(he tastes his chocolate.)* There's no sugar in this child.

Lucy. Yes, indeed, papa.

Just. No child—there's *no* sugar I tell you—that's poz!

Lucy. Oh, but, papa, I assure you I put in two lumps myself.

Just. There's *no* sugar, I say—why will you contradict me, child, for ever? there is no sugar, I say.

(Lucy leans over him playfully, and with his tea-spoon, pulls out two lumps of sugar.)

Lucy. What's that, papa?

Just. Pshaw! pshaw! pshaw! it is not melted child—it is the same as no sugar. Oh my foot, girl! my foot—you kill me—go, go, I'm busy—I've business to do—go, and send William to me; do you hear, love!

Lucy. And the old man, papa?

Just. What old man? I tell you what, I've been plagued ever since I was awake, and before I was awake, about that old man. If he can't wait, let him go about his business. Don't you know, child, I never see any body till I've drunk my chocolate—and I never will, if it was a duke, that's poz! Why it has but just struck twelve; if he can't wait, he can go about his business, can't he?

Lucy. Oh, sir, he *can* wait. It was not he who was impatient: *(she comes back playfully)* it was only I, papa, don't be angry.

Just. Well, well, well; *(finishing his cup of chocolate, and pushing the dish away)* and at any rate there was not sugar enough—send William, send William, child, and I'll finish my own business, and then——

[*Exit Lucy, dancing,* '*And then! and then!*']

JUSTICE *alone.*

Oh this foot of mine! *(twinges)* Oh this foot! Aye, if Dr. Spererib could cure one of the gout, then, indeed, I should think something of him—but, as to my leaving off my bottle of port, it's nonsense, it's all nonsense. I can't do it—I can't, and I won't, for all the Dr. Spareribs in christendom, that's poz.

Enter WILLIAM.

Just. William—oh! aye—hey—what answer, pray, did you bring from the Saracen's Head? Did you see Mrs. Bustle herself, as I bid you?

Will. Yes, sir, I saw the landlady herself; she said she would come up immediately, sir.

Just. Ah that's well—immediately?

Will. Yes, sir, and I hear her voice below now.

Just. O shew her up, shew Mrs. Bustle in.

Enter MRS. BUSTLE, *the landlady of the Saracen's Head*

Land. Good-morrow to your worship! I'm glad to see your worship look so purely. I came up with all speed; *(taking breath)* our pie is in the oven—that was what you sent for me about, I take it.

Just. True—true—sit down good Mrs. Bustle; pray——

Land. O your worship's always very good *(settling her apron)* I came up just as I was, only threw my shawl over me—I thought your worship would excuse—I'm quite as it were rejoiced to see your worship look so purely, and to find you up so hearty.

Just. O I'm very hearty, *(coughing)* always hearty, thank God for it. I hope to see many christmas doings yet Mrs. Bustle; and so our pie is in the oven, I think you say?

Land. In the oven it is. I put it in with my own hands, and, please Heaven we have but good luck in the baking, it will be as pretty a goose-pie, though I say it that

should not say it, as pretty a goose-pie as ever your worship set your eyes upon.

Just. Will you take a glass of any thing this morning, Mrs. Bustle? I have some nice usquebaugh,

Land. O no, your worship! I thank your worship, though, as much as if I took it; but I just took my luncheon before I came up—or more proper *my sandwich*, I should say, for the fashion's sake, to be sure. A *luncheon* won't go down with nobody, now-a-days. *(laughs)* I expects hostler and boots will be calling for their *sandwiches* just now. *(laughs again)* I'm sure I beg your worship's pardon for mentioning a *luncheon*.

Just. O, Mrs. Bustle, the word's a good word, for it means a good thing, ha! ha! ha! *(pulls out his watch)* but pray is it luncheon time? why it's past one, I declare, and I thought I was up in remarkably good time, too.

Land. Well, and to be sure so it was, remarkable good time for *your worship*, but folks in our way must be up betimes, you know; I've been up and about these seven hours!

Just. (stretching) Seven hours!

Land. Aye, indeed, eight, I might say, for I'm an early little body—though I say

it that should not say it, I *am* an early little body.

Just. An early little body, as you say, Mrs. Bustle; so I shall have my goose-pie for dinner, hey?

Land. For dinner, as sure as the clock strikes four; but I mustn't stay prating, for it may be spoiling if I'm away, so I must wish your worship a good morning. *(she courtesies.)*

Just. No ceremony—no ceremony, good Mrs. Bustle, your servant.

Enter WILLIAM, *to take away the chocolate; the landlady is putting on her shawl.*

Just. You may let that man know, William, that I have dispatched my *own* business, and I am at leisure for his now: *(taking a pinch of snuff)* hum—pray, William! *(justice leans back gravely)* what sort of a looking fellow is he, pray?

Will. Most like a sort of a travelling man, in my opinion, sir, or something that way, I take it.

(At these words the landlady turns round inquisitively, and delays, that she may listen, whilst she is putting on and pinning her shawl.)

Just. Hum—a sort of a travelling man —hum—lay my books out open, at the title *vagrant*—and William, tell the cook that Mrs. Bustle promises me the goose-pie for dinner—four o'clock, do you hear? And shew the old man in now.

(The landlady looks eagerly towards the door, as it opens, and exclaims—

Land. My old gentleman, as I hope to breathe!

Enter the OLD MAN.

(Lucy follows the old man on tiptoe—the justice leans back, and looks consequential—the landlady sets her arms a-kimbo; the old man starts as he sees her.)

Just. What stops you, friend? come forward, if you please.

Land. (advancing.) So, sir! is it you, sir? aye, you little looked, I warrant ye, to meet me here with his worship, but there you reckoned without your host; out of the frying pan into the fire.

Just. What is all this? what is this?

Land. (running on) None of your flummery stuff will go down with his worship, no more than with me. I give ye warning;

so you may go farther and fare worse, and spare your breath to cool your porridge.

Just. *(waves his hand with dignity)* Mrs. Bustle, good Mrs. Bustle, remember where you are. Silence! Silence! Come forward, sir, and let me hear what you have to say.

(The old man comes forward.)

Just. Who, and what may you be, friend? and what is your business with me?

Land. Sir, if your worship will give me leave——

(Justice makes a sign to her to be silent.)

Old M. Please your worship, I am an old soldier.

Land. *(interrupting)* An old hypocrite, say.

Just. Mrs. Bustle, pray—I desire—let the man speak.

Old M. For these two years past, ever since, please your worship, I wasn't able to work any longer—for in my youth I *did* work as well as the best of them—

Land. *(eager to interrupt)* You work! you——

Just. Let him finish his story, I say.

Lucy. Aye, do, do, papa, speak for him. Pray Mrs. Bustle——

Land. (*turning suddenly round to Lucy*) Miss—a good morrow to you, ma'am; I humbly beg your apologies, for not seeing you sooner, Miss Lucy.

(*Justice nods to the old man, who goes on.*)

Old M. But please your worship, it pleased God to take away the use of my left arm, and, since that, I have never been able to work.

Land. Flummery! flummery!

Just. (*angrily*) Mrs. Bustle, I have desired silence, and I will have it, that's poz! you shall have your turn presently.

Old M. For these two years past—for why should I be ashamed to tell the truth, I have lived upon charity, and I scraped together a guinea and a half, and upwards; and I was travelling with it to my grandson, in the north, with him to end my days—but —(*sighing.*)

Just. *But* what? Proceed pray to the point.

Old M. But, last night, I slept here in town, please your worship, at the Saracen's Head.

Land. (*in a rage*) At the Saracen's Head; yes, forsooth, none such ever slept at the Saracen's Head afore, or ever shall after,

as long as my name's Bustle, and the Saracen's Head is the Saracen's Head.

Just. Again! again! Mrs. Landlady, this is downright—I have said you should speak presently—he *shall* speak first, since I've said it—that's poz. Speak on, friend: you slept last night at the Saracen's Head.

Old M. Yes, please your worship, and I accuse nobody; but, at night, I had my little money safe, and in the morning, it was gone.

Land. Gone! gone indeed; in my house! and this is the way I'm to be treated; is it so? I could'nt but speak, please your worship, to such an inhuman-like, out o' the way, scandalous charge—*(turning to the old man)* and this is your gratitude, forsooth! didn't you tell me that any hole in my house was good enough for you, you wheedling hypocrite, and my thanks is to call me and mine a pack of thieves!

Old M. O, no, no, no, *no*—a pack of thieves! Heaven forbid!

Land. Aye, I thought when *I* came to speak, we should have you upon your marrow-bones in——

Just. (imperiously) Silence! five times have I commanded silence, and five times

in vain; and I won't command any thing five times in vain—that's poz!

Land. (in a pet, aside.) Old Poz! *(aloud)* Then, your worship, I don't see any business I have to be waiting here, the folks will want me at home. *(returning and whispering)* Shall I send the goose-pie up, your worship, if it's ready?

Just. (with magnanimity) I care not for the goose-pie, Mrs. Bustle; do not talk to me of goose-pies—this is no place to talk of pies.

Land. O, for that matter, your worship knows best, to be sure.

Exit landlady, angry.

SCENE III.

JUSTICE HEADSTRONG, OLD MAN, *and* LUCY.

Lucy. Ah now I'm glad he can speak; now tell papa—and you need not be afraid to speak to him, for he is very good natured. Don't contradict him though—because he told *me* not—

Just. O darling, *you* shall contradict me as often as you please; only not before I've drunk my chocolate, child. Hey! go on my good friend, you see what it is to live in a country where, thank Heaven, the poorest man may have justice, and speak his mind freely. Now speak on, and you hear, she tells you, you need not be afraid of me. Speak on.

Old M. I thank your worship, I'm sure.

Just. Thank me! for what, sir? I won't be thanked for doing justice, sir; so—but explain this matter. You lost your money, hey, at the Saracen's Head—you had it safe last night, hey? and you missed it this morning. Are you sure you had it safe at night?

Old M. O, please your worship, quite sure, for I took it out and looked at it, just before I said my prayers.

Just. You did—did ye so? hum! pray my good friend, where might you put your money when you went to bed?

Old M. Please your worship, where I always put it—always—in my tobacco-box.

Just. Your tobacco-box! I never heard of such a thing—to make a *strong box* of a tobacco-box. Ha! ha! ha! hum—and you say the box and all was gone in the morning?

Old M. No, please your worship, no, not the box; the box was never stirred from the place where I put it. They left me the box.

Just. Tut, tut, tut, man! took the money and left the box! I'll never believe *that;* I'll never believe, that any one could be such a fool. Tut, tut! the thing's impossible: it's well you are not upon oath.

Old M. If I was, please your worship, I should say the same, for it is the truth.

Just. Don't tell me, don't tell me; I say the thing is impossible.

Old M. Please your worship, here's the box.

Just. *(goes on without looking at it)* Nonsense! nonsense! it's no such thing, it's no such thing I say; no man would take the money, and leave the tobacco-box: I won't believe it—nothing shall make me believe it ever—that's poz.

Lucy. *(takes the box and holds it up before her father's eyes)* You did not see the box, did you, papa?

Just. Yes, yes, yes, child—nonsense! it's all a lie from beginning to end. A man who tells one lie will tell a hundred. All a lie! all a lie!

Old M. If your worship would give me leave——.

Just. Sir, it does not signify, it does not signify; I've said it, I've said it, and that's enough to convince me; and I'll tell you more, if my Lord Chief Justice of England told it to me, I would not believe it—that's poz!

Lucy. (still playing with the box) But how comes the box here, I wonder?

Just. Pshaw! pshaw! pshaw, darling! Go to your dolls, darling, and don't be positive; go to your dolls, and don't talk of what you don't understand. What can you understand, I want to know, of the law?

Lucy. No, papa, I didn't mean about the law, but about the box; because, if the man had taken it, how could it be here, you know, papa?

Just. Hey, hey, what? Why what I say is this, that I don't dispute, that that box, that you hold in your hands is a box; nay, for ought I know it may be a tobacco box; but it's clear to me, that if they left the box they did not take the money. And how do you dare, sir, to come before Justice Headstrong with a lie in your mouth? Recollect yourself. I'll give you time to recollect your-

self. *(a pause)* Well, sir, and what do you say now about the box?

Old M. Please your worship, with submission, I *can* say nothing but what I said before.

Just. What contradict me again! after I gave ye time to recollect yourself! I've done with ye, I have done; contradict me as often as you please, but you cannot impose upon me; I defy you to impose upon me!

Old M. Impose!

Just. I know the law! I know the law! and I'll make you know it too. One hour I give you to recollect yourself, and if you don't give up this idle story, I'll—I'll commit you as a vagrant—that's poz! Go, go for the present. William, take him into the servants' hall, do you hear? What take the money and leave the box! I'll never believe it, that's poz!

(Lucy speaks to the old man as he is going off.)

Lucy. Don't be frightened! don't be frightened! I mean, if you tell the truth, never be frightened.

Old M. If I tell the truth—*(turning up his eyes.)*

Old Man is still held back by

Lucy. One moment—answer me one question—because of something that just came into my head. Was the box shut fast when you left it?

Old M. No, miss, no! Open—it was open, for I could not find the lid in the dark—my candle went out. *If* I tell the truth—oh! [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

JUSTICE'S *study—the* JUSTICE *is writing.*

Old M. Well! I shall have but few days more misery in this world!

Just. (looks up) Why! why, why then, why will you be so positive to persist in a lie? Take the money and leave the box! Obstinate blockhead! Here, William! *(shewing the committal)* take this old gentleman to Holdfast, the constable, and give him this warrant.

Enter LUCY, *running, out of breath.*

I've found it! I've found it! I've found it! Here, old man; here's your money—

here it is all—a guinea, and a half, and a shilling, and a sixpence, just as he said, papa.

Enter LANDLADY.

O la! your worship, did you ever hear the like?

Just. I've heard nothing yet, that I can understand. First, have you secured the thief, I say?

Lucy. (makes a sign to the landlady to be silent) Yes, yes, yes! we have him safe, we have him prisoner. Shall he come in, papa?

Just. Yes, child, by all means; and now I shall hear what possessed him to leave the box. I don't understand, there's something deep in all this; I don't understand it. Now I do desire, Mrs. Landlady, nobody may speak a single word, whilst I am cross-examining the thief. *(Landlady puts her finger upon her lips—every body looks eagerly towards the door.)*

Re-enter LUCY, *with a huge wicker cage in her hand, containing a magpie. The justice drops the committal out of his hand.*

Just. Hey! what! Mrs. Landlady! the old magpie! hey!

Land. Aye, your worship, my old magpie; who'd have thought it? Miss was very clever, it was she caught the thief. Miss was very clever.

Old M. Very good! very good!

Just. Aye, darling! her father's own child! How was it, child? Caught the thief *with the mainour*, hey! tell us all—I will hear all—that's poz!

Lucy. Oh then, first I must tell you how I came to suspect Mr. magpie. Do you remember papa, that day last summer, that I went with you to the bowling-green at the Saracen's Head?

Land. O, of all the days in the year—but I ask pardon, miss.

Lucy. Well, that day I heard my uncle and another gentleman telling stories of magpies hiding money; and they laid a wager about this old magpie, and they tried him—they put a shilling upon the table, and he ran away with it, and hid it: so I thought that he might do so again, you know, this time.

Just. Right! right! It's a pity, child, you are not upon the bench; ha! ha! ha!

Lucy. And when I went to his old hiding place, there it was: but you see, papa, he did not take the box.

Just. No, no, no! because the thief was a magpie; no *man* would have taken the money, and left the box. You see I was right; no *man* would have left the box, hey?

Lucy. Certainly not, I suppose; but I'm so very glad, old man, that you have gotten your money.

Just. Well then, child, here take my purse, and add that to it. We were a little too hasty with the committal, hey?

Land. Aye, and I fear I was so too; but when one is touched about the credit of one's house, one's apt to speak warmly.

Old M. O I'm the happiest man alive! You are all convinced I told you no lies; say no more—say no more—I am the happiest man! Miss, you have made me the happiest old man alive! God bless you for it.

Land. Well now, I'll tell you what—I know what I think—you must keep that there magpie, and make a show of him, and I warrant he'll bring you many an honest penny; for it's a *true story*, and folks will like to hear it, I hopes——

Just. (eagerly) And friend, do you hear, you'll dine here to-day—you'll dine here—we have some excellent ale—I will

have you drink my health, that's poz! hey, you'll drink my health, won't you, hey?

Old M. (bows) O--and the young lady's, if you please.

Just. Aye, aye, drink her health, she deserves it: aye, drink my darling's health.

Land. And please your worship, it's the right time I believe, to speak of the goose-pie now, and a charming pie it is, and it's on the table.

Will. And Mr. Smack, the curate, and Squire Solid, and the doctor, sir, are come, and dinner is upon the table.

Just. Then let us say no more, but do justice immediately to the goose-pie; and, darling, put me in mind to tell this story after dinner.

(After they go out, the justice stops.)

Tell this story! I don't know whether it tells well for me—but I'll never be positive any more—*that's poz.*

THE MIMIC.

CHAPTER I.

MR. and Mrs. Montague spent the summer of the year 1795, at Clifton, with their son Frederick, and their two daughters, Sophia and Marianne. They had taken much care of the education of their children, nor were they ever tempted by any motive of personal convenience, or temporary amusement, to hazard the permanent happiness of their pupils.

Sensible of the extreme importance of early impressions, and of the powerful influence of external circumstances in forming the character and the manners, they were now anxious that the variety of new ideas, and new objects, which would strike the minds of their children, should appear in a just point of view.

'Let children see, and judge for themselves,' is often inconsiderately said. Where

children see only a part, they cannot judge of the whole; and from the superficial view which they can have in short visits, and desultory conversation, they can form only a false estimate of the objects of human happiness, a false notion of the nature of society, and false opinions of characters. For these reasons Mr. and Mrs. Montague were particularly cautious in the choice of their acquaintance, as they were well aware, that whatever passed in conversation before their children became part of their education. When they came to Clifton, they wished to have had a house entirely to themselves; but as they came late in the season, almost all the lodging houses were full, and for a few weeks they were obliged to remain in a house, in which some of the apartments were already occupied.

During the first fortnight, they scarcely saw or heard any thing of one of the families, who lodged on the same floor with them. An elderly quaker, and his sister Birtha, were their silent neighbours. The blooming complexion of the lady had indeed attracted the attention of the children, as they caught a glimpse of her face, when she was getting into her carriage, to go out upon the Downs. They could scarcely

believe that she came to the wells on account of her health. Besides her blooming complexion, the delicate white of her garments had struck them with admiration, and they observed, that her brother carefully guarded these from the wheel of the carriage, as he handed her in. From this circumstance, and from the benevolent countenance of the old gentleman, they concluded, that he was very fond of his sister, that they were certainly very happy, only they never spoke, and could be seen but for a moment.

Not so the maiden lady who occupied the ground floor. On the stairs, in the passages, at her window, she was continually visible, and she seemed to possess the art of being present in all these places at once. Her voice was eternally to be heard, and it was not particularly melodious. The very first day she met Mrs. Montague's children on the stairs, she stopped to tell Marianne, that she was a charming dear! and a charming little dear! to kiss her, to inquire her name, and to inform her, that her own name was 'Mrs. Theresa Tattle;' a circumstance of which there was little danger of their long remaining in ignorance, for in the course of one morning at least twenty single, and as many double raps at the door, were

succeeded by vociferations of 'Mrs. Theresa Tattle's servant!'—'Mrs. Theresa Tattle at home?'—'Mrs. Theresa Tattle not at home.'

No person at the wells was oftener at home and abroad than Mrs. Tattle! She had, as she deemed it, the happiness, to have a most extensive acquaintance residing at Clifton. She had for years kept a register of arrivals. She regularly consulted the subscriptions to the circulating libraries, and the lists at the ball and the pump-rooms; so that with a memory unincumbered with literature, and free from all domestic cares, she contrived to retain a most astonishing and correct list of births, deaths, and marriages, together with all the anecdotes, amusing, instructive, or scandalous, which are necessary to the conversation of a water-drinking place, and essential to the character of a 'very pleasant woman.'

'A very pleasant woman,' Mrs. Tattle was usually called; and conscious of her accomplishments, she was eager to introduce herself to the acquaintance of her new neighbours; having, with her ordinary expedition, collected from their servants, by means of her own, all that could be known, or rather all that could be told, about them.

The name of Montague, at all events, she knew was a good name, and justified her courting this acquaintance. She courted it first by nods, and becks, and smiles, at Marianne, whenever she met her; and Marianne, who was a very little girl, began presently to nod and smile in return; persuaded, that a lady who smiled so much, could not be ill-natured. Besides, Mrs. Theresa's parlour door was sometimes left more than half open, to afford a view of a green parrot. Marianne sometimes passed very slowly by this door. One morning it was left quite wide open, she stopped to say 'Pretty Poll,' and immediately Mrs. Tattle begged she would do her the honour to walk in and see 'Pretty Poll;' at the same time taking the liberty to offer her a piece of iced plum-cake.

The next day Mrs. Theresa Tattle did herself the honour to wait upon Mrs. Montague, 'to apologise for the liberty she had taken, in inviting Mrs. Montague's charming Miss Marianne into her apartment to see Pretty Poll; and for the still greater liberty she had taken in offering her a piece of plum-cake, inconsiderate creature that she was! which might possibly have disagreed with her, and which certainly were

liberties she never should have been induced to take, if she had not been unaccountably bewitched by Miss Marianne's striking, though highly flattering resemblance, to a young gentleman, an officer, with whom she had danced, she was sorry to say, now nearly twelve years ago, at the races in ——shire, of the name of Montague, a most respectable young man, and of a most respectable family, with which, in a remote degree, she might presume to say, she herself was someway connected, having the honour to be nearly related to the Jones's of Merionethshire, who were cousins to the Manwairings, of Bedfordshire, who married into the family of the Griffiths's, the eldest branch of which she understood had the honour to be cousin german to Mr. Montague; on which account she had been impatient to pay a visit so likely to be productive of most agreeable consequences, in the acquisition of an acquaintance, whose society must do her infinite honour.'

Having thus happily accomplished her first visit, there seemed little probability of escaping Mrs. Tattle's farther acquaintance. In the course of the first week, she only hinted to Mr. Montague, that 'some people thought his system of education rather

odd; that she should be obliged to him, if he would, some time or other, when he had nothing else to do, just sit down and make her understand his notions, that she might have something to say to her acquaintance, as she always wished to have, when she heard any friend attacked, or any friend's opinions.'

Mr. Montague declining to sit down and make this lady understand a system of education only to give her something to say, and shewing unaccountable indifference about the attacks with which he was threatened, Mrs. Tattle next addressed herself to Mrs. Montague, prophesying, in a most serious whisper, 'that the charming Miss Marianne would shortly and inevitably grow quite crooked, if she were not immediately provided with a back-board, a French dancing-master, and a pair of stocks.' This alarming whisper could not, however, have a permanent effect upon Mrs. Montague's understanding, because three days afterwards, Mrs. Theresa, upon the most anxious inspection, mistook the hip and shoulder which should have been the highest. This danger vanishing, Mrs. Tattle presently, with a rueful length of face, and formal preface, 'hesitated to assure Mrs. Montague,

that she was greatly distressed about her daughter Sophy; that she was convinced her lungs were affected; and that she certainly ought to drink the waters morning and evening; and above all things must keep one of the patirosa lozenges constantly in her mouth, and directly consult Dr. Cardamum, the best physician in the world, and the person she would send for herself upon her death bed; because, to her certain knowledge, he had recovered a young lady, a relation of her own, after she had lost one whole *globe* of her lungs.'

The medical opinion of a lady of so much anatomical precision could not have much weight; nor was this universal adviser more successful in an attempt to introduce a tutor to Frederick, who, she apprehended, must want one to perfect him in the Latin and Greek, and dead languages, of which she observed it would be impertinent for a woman to talk, only she might venture to repeat what she had heard said by good authority, that a competency of the dead tongues could be had no where but at a publick school, or else from a private tutor, who had been abroad (after the advantage of a classical education, finished in one of the universities) with a good family, without

which introduction, it was idle to think of reaping solid advantages from any continental tour; all which requisites she could from personal knowledge, aver concentrated in the gentleman she had the honour to recommend, as having been tutor to a young nobleman, who had now no farther occasion for him, being unfortunately for himself and his family, killed in an untimely duel.

All her suggestions being lost upon these unthinking parents, Mrs. Theresa Tattle's powers were next tried upon the children, and presently her success was apparent. On Sophy, indeed, she could not make any impression, though she had expended on her some of her finest strokes of flattery. Sophy, though very desirous of the approbation of her friends, was not very desirous to win the favour of strangers. She was about thirteen, that dangerous age at which ill-educated girls, in their anxiety to display their accomplishments, are apt to become dependent for applause upon the praise of every idle visitor; when the habits not being formed, and the attention being suddenly turned to dress and manners, girls are apt to affect and imitate, indiscriminately, every thing that they fancy to be agreeable.

Sophy, whose taste had been cultivated at the same time with her powers of reasoning, was not liable to fall into these errors; she found, that she could please those whom she wished to please, without affecting to be any thing but what she really was; and her friends listened to what she said, though she never repeated the sentiments, or adopted the phrases which she might easily have caught from the conversation of those who were older, or more fashionable than herself. This word fashionable, Mrs. Theresa Tattle knew had usually a great effect even at thirteen, but she had not observed that it had much power upon Sophy; nor were her documents concerning grace and manners much attended to. Her mother had taught Sophy that it was best to let herself alone, and not to distort either her person or her mind, in acquiring grimace, which nothing but the fashion of the moment can support, and which is always detected and despised by people of real good sense and politeness.

'Bless me!' said Mrs. Tattle to herself, 'if I had such a tall daughter, and so unformed, before my eyes from morning to night, it would certainly break my poor heart. Thank God I am not a mother! Miss Marianne for me, if I was!'

Miss Marianne had heard so often from Mrs. Tattle that she was charming, that she could not help believing it; and from being a very pleasing unaffected little girl, she in a short time grew so conceited, that she could neither speak, look, move, nor be silent, without imagining that every body was, or ought to be, looking at her; and when Mrs. Theresa saw that Mrs. Montague looked very grave upon these occasions, she to repair the ill she had done, would say, after praising Marianne's hair or her eyes, 'O, but little ladies should never think about their beauty you know; nobody loves any body you know for being handsome, but for being good.' People must think children are very silly, or else they can never have reflected upon the nature of belief in their own minds, if they imagine, that children will believe the words that are said to them by way of moral, when the countenance, manner, and every concomitant circumstance tell them a different tale. Children are excellent physiognomists, they quickly learn the universal language of looks, and what is said of them always makes a greater impression, than what is said to them; a truth of which those prudent people surely cannot be aware, who comfort themselves, and

apologize to parents, by saying, 'O but I would not say so and so to the child.'

Mrs. Theresa had seldom said to Frederick Montague, 'that he had a vast deal of drollery, and was a most incomparable mimic;' but she had said so of him in whispers, which magnified the sound to his imagination, if not to his ear. He was a boy of much vivacity, and had considerable abilities; but his appetite for vulgar praise had not yet been surfeited; even Mrs. Theresa Tattle's flattery pleased him, and he exerted himself for her entertainment so much, that he became quite a buffoon. Instead of observing characters and manners, that he might judge of them and form his own, he now watched every person he saw, that he might detect some foible, or catch some singularity in their gesture or pronunciation, which he might successfully mimic.

Alarmed by the rapid progress of these evils, Mr. and Mrs. Montague, who, from the first day that they had been honoured with Mrs. Tattle's visit, had begun to look out for new lodgings, were now extremely impatient to decamp. They were not people, who, from the weak fear of offending a silly acquaintance, would hazard the happiness of their family. They had heard of a

house in the country, which was likely to suit them, and they determined to go directly to look at it. As they were to be absent all day, they foresaw their officious neighbour would probably interfere with their children. They did not choose to exact any promise from them, which they might be tempted to break, and therefore they only said at parting, 'If Mrs. Theresa Tattle should ask you to come to her, do as you think proper.'

Scarcely had Mrs. Montague's carriage gone out of hearing, when a note was brought, directed to 'Frederick Montague, Esq. junior,' which he immediately opened, and read as follows:

'Mrs. Theresa Tattle presents her very best compliments to the entertaining Mr. Frederick Montague; she hopes he will have the charity to drink tea with her this evening, and bring his charming sister Marianne with him, as Mrs. Theresa will be quite alone, with a shocking head ach, and is sensible her nerves are affected; and Dr. Cardamum says, that (especially in Mrs. T. T.'s case) it is downright death to nervous patients to be alone an instant; she therefore trusts Mr. Frederick will not refuse to come and make her laugh.'

'Mrs. Theresa has taken care to provide a few macaroons for her little favourite, who said she was particularly fond of them, the other day.'

'Mrs. Theresa hopes they will all come at six, or before, not forgetting Miss Sophy, if she will condescend to be of the party.'

At the first reading of this note, 'the entertaining' Mr. Frederick, and 'the charming' Miss Marianne, laughed heartily, and looked at Sophy as if they were afraid that she should think it possible they could like such gross flattery; but upon a second perusal, Marianne observed, that it certainly was good-natured of Mrs. Theresa to remember the macaroons; and Frederick allowed that it was wrong to laugh at the poor woman because she had the head-ach. Then twisting the note in his fingers, he appealed to Sophy; 'Well, Sophy, leave off drawing for an instant, and tell us, what answer can we send?'

'Can! we can send what answer we please.'

'Yes, I know that,' said Frederick; 'I would refuse if I could, but we ought not to do any thing rude, should we? So I think we might as well go, hey! because we could not refuse, if we would, I say.'

'You have made such confusion,' replied Sophy, 'between 'couldn't,' and 'wouldn't,' and 'shouldn't,' that I can't understand you; surely they are all different things.'

'Different! no,' cried Frederick, 'could, would, should, might, and ought, are all the same thing in the Latin grammar; all of 'em signs of the potential mood, you know.'

Sophy, whose powers of reasoning were not to be confounded even by quotations from the Latin grammar, looked up soberly from her drawing, and answered, that very likely those words might be signs of the same thing in the Latin grammar, but that she believed they meant perfectly different things in real life.

'That's just as people please,' said her sophistical brother, 'you know words mean nothing in themselves. If I chose to call my hat my cadwallader, you would understand me just as well, after I had once explained it to you that by cadwallader I meant this black thing, that I put upon my head; cadwallader and hat would then be just the same thing to you.'

'Then why have two words for the same thing?' said Sophy; 'and what has this to

do with, 'could' and 'should'? You wanted to prove—'

'I wanted to prove,' interrupted Frederick, 'that it's not worth while to dispute for two hours about two words. Do keep to the point, Sophy, and don't dispute with me.'

'I was not disputing, I was reasoning.'

'Well, reasoning or disputing. Women have no business to do either; for how should they know how to chop logic like men?'

At this contemptuous sarcasm upon her sex, Sophy's colour rose. 'There!' cried Frederick, exulting, 'now we shall see a philosopheress in a passion; I'd give sixpence, half price for a harlequin entertainment, to see Sophy in a passion. Now, Marianne, look at her brush dabbling so fast in the water!'

Sophy, who could not easily bear to be laughed at, with some little indignation said, 'Brother, I wish,——'

'There! there!' cried Frederick, pointing to the colour, which rose in her cheek almost to her temples; 'rising! rising! rising! Look at the thermometer. Blood heat! Blood! Fever heat! Boiling water heat! Marianne.'

'Then,' said Sophy, smiling, 'you should stand a little farther off, both of you; leave

the thermometer to itself a little while; give it time to cool. It will come down to temperate by the time you look again.'

'O, brother,' cried Marianne, 'she's so good-humour'd, don't teize her any more; and don't draw heads upon her paper; and don't stretch her rubber out; and don't let us dirty any more of her brushes: see! the sides of her tumbler are all manner of colours.'

'O, I only mixed red, blue, green, and yellow, to shew you, Marianne, that all colours mixed together make white. But she is temperate now, and I won't plague her; she shall chop logic if she likes it, though she is a woman.'

'But that's not fair, brother,' said Marianne, 'to say woman in that way; I'm sure Sophy found out how to tie that difficult knot, which papa shewed to us yesterday, long before you did, though you are a man.'

'Not long,' said Frederick; 'besides, that was only a conjuring trick.'

'It was very ingenious, though,' said Marianne, 'and papa said so; and besides, she understood the rule of three, which was no conjuring trick, better than you did, though she is a woman; and she may reason too, mamma says.'

'Very well, let her reason away,' said the provoking wit; 'all I have to say is, she'll never be able to make a pudding.'

'Why not, pray brother,' inquired Sophy, looking up again very gravely.'

'Why, you know papa himself, the other day at dinner, said, that that woman, who talks Greek and Latin as well as I do, is a fool after all; and that she had better have learned something useful; and Mrs. Tattle said, she'd answer for it she did not know how to make a pudding.'

'Well, but I am not talking Greek and Latin, am I?'

'No, but you are drawing, and that's the same thing.'

'The same thing! O Frederick,' said little Marianne, laughing.

'You may laugh, but I say it is the same sort of thing. Women that are always drawing, and reasoning, never know how to make puddings—Mrs. Theresa Tattle said so, when I shewed her Sophy's beautiful drawing yesterday.'

'Mrs. Theresa Tattle might say so,' replied Sophy, calmly, 'but I do not perceive the reason, brother, why drawing should prevent me from learning how to make a pudding.'

'Well, I say you'll never learn to make a good pudding.'

'I have learned,' continued Sophy, who was mixing her colours, 'to mix such and such colours together to make the colour that I want; and why should I not be able to learn to mix flour and butter, and sugar and egg together, to make the taste that I want?'

'O, but mixing will never do, unless you know the quantities, like a cook; and you would never learn the right quantities.'

'How did the cook learn them? cannot I learn them as she did?'

'Yes, but you'd never do it exactly, and mind the spoonfuls right, by the receipt, like a cook, exactly.'

'Indeed, indeed but she would,' cried Marianne, eagerly, 'and a great deal more exactly, for mamma has taught her to weigh and measure things very carefully; and when I was ill, she always weighed my bark so nicely, and dropped my drops so carefully; not like the cook. When mamma took me down to see her make a cake once, I saw her spoonfuls, and her ounces, and her handfuls; she dashed and splashed without minding exactness, or the receipt, or any thing. I'm sure Sophy would make a much better pudding, if exactness only is wanting.'

'Well, granting that she could make the best pudding in the whole world, what does that signify? I say she never would, so it comes to the same thing.'

'Never would! how can you tell that, brother?'

'Why now look at her, with her books, and her drawings, and all this apparatus; do you think she would ever jump up, with all her nicety too, and put by all these things, to go down into the greasy kitchen, and plump up to the elbows in suet, like a cook, for a plum-pudding?'

'I need not plump up to the elbows, brother,' said Sophy, smiling; 'nor is it necessary that I should be a cook; but if it were necessary, I hope I should be able to make a pudding.'

'Yes, yes, yes,' cried Marianne, warmly, 'that she would jump up, and put by all her things in a minute, if it was necessary, and run down stairs and up again like lightning, or do any thing that was ever so disagreeable to her, even about the suet, with all her nicety brother, I assure you, as she used to do any thing, every thing for me, when I was ill last winter. O, brother, she can do any thing; and she could make the best plum-pudding in the whole world, I'm sure, in a minute, if it was necessary.'

CHAPTER II.

A KNOCK at the door from Mrs. Theresa Tattle's servant recalled Marianne to the business of the day.

'There,' said Frederick, 'we have sent no answer all this time. It's necessary to think of that in a minute.'

The servant came with his mistress's compliments, to let the young ladies and Mr. Frederick know that she was waiting tea for them.

'Waiting! then we must go,' said Frederick.'

The servant opened the door wider to let him pass, and Marianne thought she must follow her brother, so they went down stairs together, whilst Sophy gave her own message to the servant, and quietly staid at her usual occupations.

Mrs. Tattle was seated at her tea-table, with a large plate of macaroons beside her, when Frederick and Marianne entered. She was 'delighted' they were come, and 'grieved' not to see Miss Sophy along with them. Marianne coloured a little, for though she had precipitately followed her brother, and though he had quieted her conscience for a moment by saying, 'You know papa and mamma told us to do what we thought best,' yet she did not feel quite pleased with herself; and it was not till after Mrs. Theresa had exhausted all her compliments, and half her macaroons, that she could restore her spirits to their usual height.

'Come, Mr. Frederick,' said she, after tea, 'you promised to make me laugh; and nobody can make me laugh so well as yourself.'

'O, brother,' said Marianne, 'shew Mrs. Theresa Dr. Carbuncle eating his dinner, and I'll be Mrs. Carbuncle.'

Marianne. Now my dear, what shall I help you to?

Frederick. My dear! she never calls him my dear, you know, but always doctor.

Mar. Well then, doctor, what will you eat to day?

Fred. Eat, madam? eat? Nothing! nothing! I don't see any thing here that I can eat, ma'am.

Mar. Here's eels, sir; let me help you to some eel, stewed eel, sir, you used to be fond of stewed eel.

Fred. Used, ma'am! used! But I'm sick of stewed eels. You would tire one of any thing. Am I to see nothing but eels? And what's this at the bottom?

Mar. Mutton, doctor—roast mutton, if you'll be so good as to cut it.

Fred. Cut it ma'am! I can't cut it I say. It's as hard as a deal board. You might as well tell me to cut the table, ma'am. Mutton indeed! not a bit of fat! Roast mutton indeed! not a drop of gravy. Mutton truly! quite a cinder. I'll have none of it. Here, take it away; take it down stairs to the cook. It's a very hard case, Mrs. Carbuncle, that I can never have a bit of any thing that I can eat at my own table, Mrs. Carbuncle, since I was married ma'am; I that am the easiest man in the whole world to please about my dinner. It's really very extraordinary, Mrs. Carbuncle! What have you at that corner there, under the cover?

Mar. Patties, sir; oyster patties.

Fred. Patties, ma'am! kickshaws! I hate kickshaws. Not worth puting under a cover, ma'am. And why have not you glass covers, that one may see one's dinner before one, before it grows cold with asking questions, Mrs. Carbuncle, and lifting up covers? But nobody has any sense, and I see no water-plates any where lately.

Mar. Do, pray, doctor, let me help you to a bit of this chicken before it gets cold, my dear.

Fred. (aside) My dear again, Marianne!

Mar. Yes, brother because she is frightened you know, and Mrs. Carbuncle always says 'my dear' to him when she's frightened, and looks so pale from side to side, and sometimes she cries before dinner's done; and then all the company are quite silent, and don't know what to do.

'O, such a little creature! to have so much sense too!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa with rapture. 'Mr. Frederick, you'll make me die with laughing! Pray go on, Doctor Carbuncle.'

Fred. Well, ma'am, then if I must eat something, send me a bit of fowl; a leg and wing, the liver-wing, and a bit of the breast, oyster sauce, and a slice of that ham, if you please ma'am.

[*Dr. Carbuncle eats voraciously, with his head down to his plate; and dropping the sauce, he buttons up his coat tight across the breast.*]

Fred. Here! A plate, knife and fork, bit o' bread, a glass of Dorchester ale!

'O, admirable!' exclaimed Mrs. Tattle, clapping her hands.

'Now, brother, suppose that it is after dinner,' said Marianne, 'and shew us how the doctor goes to sleep.'

Frederick threw himself back in an arm chair, leaning his head back, with his mouth open, snoring; nodded from time to time, crossed and uncrossed his legs, tried to waken himself by twitching his wig, settling his collar, blowing his nose, and rapping on the lid of his snuff box.

All which infinitely diverted Mrs. Tattle, who, when she could stop herself from laughing, 'declared it made her sigh too, to think of the life poor Mrs. Carbuncle led with that man, and all for nothing too, for her jointure was nothing, next to nothing, though a great thing to be sure her friends thought for her, when she was only Sally Ridgway, before she was married. Such a wife as she makes, continued Mrs. Theresa, lifting up her hands

and eyes to heaven, and so much as she has gone through, the brute ought to be ashamed of himself, if he does not leave her something extraordinary in his will; for turn it which way she will, she can never keep a carriage, or live like any body else on her jointure, after all, she tells me, poor soul! a sad prospect after her husband's death to look forward to, instead of being comfortable, as her friends expected; and she, poor young thing, knowing no better when they married her. People should look into these things before hand, or never marry at all, I say, Miss Marianne.'

Miss Marianne, who did not clearly comprehend this affair of the jointure, or the reason why Mrs. Carbuncle would be so unhappy after her husband's death, turned to Frederick, who was at that instant studying Mrs. Theresa as a future character to mimic, 'Brother,' said Marianne, 'now sing an Italian song for us like Miss Croker. Pray, Miss Croker, favour us with a song; Mrs. Theresa Tattle has never had the pleasure of hearing you sing; she's quite impatient to hear you sing.'

'Yes, indeed I am,' said Mrs. Theresa.

Frederick put his hands before him affectedly; O, indeed, ma'am! indeed, ladies!

I really am so hoarse, it distresses me so to be pressed to sing; besides, upon my word, I have quite left off singing. I've never sung once, except for very particular people, this winter.'

Mar. But Mrs. Theresa Tattle is a very particular person, I'm sure you'll sing for her.

Fred. Certainly, ma'am, I allow you use a powerful argument; but I assure you now, I would do my best to oblige you, but I absolutely have forgotten all my English songs. Nobody hears any thing but Italian now, and I have been so giddy as to leave my Italian music behind me. Besides, I make it a rule never to hazard myself without an accompaniment.

Mar. Oh, try, Miss Croker, for once.

[*Frederick sings, after much preluding.*]

Violante in the pantry,
Gnawing of a mutton bone;
How she gnawed it,
How she clawed it,
When she found herself alone.

'Charming!' exclaimed Mrs. Tattle; 'so like Miss Croker, I'm sure I shall think of you, Mr Frederick, when I hear her asked

to sing again. Her voice, however, introduces her to very pleasant parties, and she's a girl that's very much taken notice of, and I don't doubt will go off vastly well. She's a particular favourite of mine, you must know; and I mean to do her a piece of service the first opportunity, by saying something or other that shall go round to her relations in Northumberland, and make them do something for her; as well they may, for they are all rolling in gold, and won't give her a penny.'

Mar. Now, brother, read the newspaper like Counsellor Puff.

'O, pray do, Mr. Frederick, for I declare I admire you of all things! you are quite yourself to-night. Here's a newspaper, sir. Pray let us have Counsellor Puff. It's not late.'

[*Frederick reads in a pompous voice.*]

'As a delicate white hand has ever been deemed a distinguishing ornament in either sex, Messrs. Valiant and Wise conceive it to be their duty, to take the earliest opportunity to advertise the nobility and gentry of Great Britain in general, and their friends in particular, that they have now ready for

sale, as usual, at the Hippocrates's Head, a fresh assortment of new-invented, much admired primrose soap. To prevent impositions and counterfeits, the public are requested to take notice, that the only genuine primrose soap is stamped on the outside, 'Valiant and Wise.'

'O, you most incomparable mimic! 'tis absolutely the counsellor himself. I absolutely must shew you, some day, to my friend Lady Battersby; you'd absolutely make her die with laughing; and she'd quite adore you,' said Mrs. Theresa, who was well aware that every pause must be filled with flattery. 'Pray go on, pray go on, I shall never be tired, if I were to sit looking at you these hundred years.'

Stimulated by these plaudits, Frederick proceeded to shew how Colonel Epaulette blew his nose, flourished his cambric handkerchief, bowed to Lady Di Periwinkle, and admired her work, saying, 'done by no hands, as you may guess, but those of Fairly Fair.' Whilst Lady Di, he observed, simpered so prettily, and took herself so quietly for Fairly Fair, not perceiving, that the colonel was admiring his own nails all the while.

Next to Colonel Epaulette, Frederick, at Marianne's particular desire, came into the room like Sir Charles Slang.

'Very well, brother,' cried she, 'your hand down to the very bottom of your pocket, and your other shoulder up to your ear; but you are not quite wooden enough, and you should walk as if your hip was out of joint. There now, Mrs. Tattle, are not those good eyes? they stare so like his, without seeming to see any thing all the while.'

'Excellent! admirable! Mr. Frederick, I must say you are the best mimic of your age, I ever saw, and I'm sure Lady Battersby will think so too; that is Sir Charles to the very life. But with all that, you must know he's a mighty pleasant, fashionable young man, when you come to know him, and has a great deal of sense under all that, and is of a very good family, the Slangs you know. Sir Charles will come into a fine fortune himself next year, if he can keep clear of gambling, which I hear is his foible, poor young man. Pray go on, I interrupt you, Mr. Frederick.'

'Now, brother,' said Marianne.

'No, Marianne, I can do no more, I'm quite tired, and I will do no more,' said

Frederick, stretching himself at full length upon a sopha.

Even in the midst of laughter, and whilst the voice of flattery yet sounded in his ear, Frederick felt sad, displeased with himself, and disgusted with Mrs. Theresa.

'What a deep sigh was there!' said Mrs. Theresa, 'what can make you sigh so bitterly? you, who make every body else laugh. O, such another sigh again!'

'Marianne,' cried Frederick, 'do you remember the man in the mask?'

'What man in the mask, brother?'

'The man—the actor—the buffoon, that my father told us of, who used to cry behind the mask, that made every body else laugh.'

'Cry! bless me,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'mighty odd! very extraordinary! but one can't be surprised at meeting with extraordinary characters amongst that race of people. Actors, by profession, you know, who are brought up from the egg to make their fortune, or at least their bread, by their oddities. But, my dear Mr. Frederick, you are quite pale, quite exhausted—no wonder—what will you have, a glass of cowslip wine?'

'O, no, thank you ma'am,' said Frederick.

'O, yes; indeed you must not leave me without taking something; and Miss Marianne must have another macaroon; I insist upon it,' said Mrs. Theresa, ringing the bell. 'It is not late, and my man Christopher will bring up the cowslip wine in a minute.'

'But Sophy! and papa and mamma you know will come home just now,' said Marianne.

'O, Miss Sophy has her books and drawings; you know she's never afraid of being alone; besides, to night it was her own choice; and as to your papa and mamma, they won't be home to-night, I'm pretty sure; for a gentleman, who had it from their own authority, told me where they were going, which is farther off than they think, but they did not consult me; and I fancy they'll be obliged to sleep out, so you need not be in a hurry about them. We'll have candles.'

The door opened just as Mrs. Tattle was going to ring the bell again for candles, and the cowslip wine. 'Christopher! Christopher!' said Mrs. Theresa, who was standing at the fire, with her back to the door when it opened, 'Christopher! pray bring ——do you hear?' But no Christopher answered! and, upon turning round, Mrs

Tattle, instead of Christopher, beheld two little black figures, which stood perfectly still and silent. It was so dark, that their forms could scarcely be discerned.

'In the name of Heaven, who and what may you be? Speak, I conjure you! what are ye?'

'The chimney-sweepers, ma'am, and please your ladyship.'

'Chimney-sweepers!' repeated Frederick and Marianne, bursting out a laughing.

'Chimney-sweepers!' repeated Mrs. Theresa, provoked at the recollection of her late solemn address to them—'Chimney-sweepers! and could not you say so a little sooner? And pray what brings you here, gentlemen, at this time of night?'

'The bell rang, ma'am,' answered the squeaking voice.

'The bell rang! yes, for Christopher. The boy's mad, or drunk.'

'Ma'am,' said the tallest of the chimney-sweepers, who had not yet spoken, and who now began in a very blunt manner, 'Ma'am your brother desired us to come up when the bell rang; so we did.'

'My brother! I have no brother, dunce,' said Mrs. Theresa.

'Mr. Eden madam.'

'O, ho!' said Mrs. Tattle in a more complacent tone, 'the boy takes me for Miss Birtha Eden, I perceive;' and, flattered to be taken in the dark, by a chimney-sweeper for a young and handsome lady, Mrs. Theresa laughed, and informed him, 'that they had mistaken the room; that they must go up another pair of stairs, and turn to the left.'

The chimney-sweeper with the squeaking voice bowed, thanked her ladyship for this information, said 'Good night to ye, quality;' and they both moved towards the door.

'Stay,' said Mrs. Tattle, whose curiosity was excited. 'What can the Edens want with chimney-sweepers at this time o'night, I wonder? Christopher, did you hear any thing about it?' said the lady to her footman, who was now lighting the candles.

'Upon my word, ma'am,' said the servant, 'I can't say, but I'll step down below and inquire. I heard them talking about it in the kitchen, but I only got a word here and there, for I was hunting for the snuff-dish, as I knew it must be for candles, when I heard the bell ring, ma'am, so I thought to find the snuff-dish, before I answered the bell, for I knew it must be for candles you rang. But, if you please, I'll step down

now, ma'am, and see about the chimney-sweeps.'

'Yes, step down do, and, Christopher, bring up the cowslip wine, and some more macaroons for my little Marianne.'

Marianne withdrew rather coldly from a kiss, which Mrs. Tattle was going to give her, for she was somewhat surprised at the familiarity with which this lady talked to her footman. She had not been used to these manners in her father and mother, and she did not like them.

'Well,' said Mrs. Tattle to Christopher, who was now returned, 'what is the news?'

'Ma'am, the little fellow with the squeaking voice has been telling me the whole story. The other morning, ma'am, early, he and the other were down the hill, sweeping in Paradise-row; those chimnies, they say are difficult; and the square fellow, ma'am, the biggest of the two boys, got wedged in the chimney; the other little fellow was up at the top at the time, and he heard the cry, but in his fright, and all, he did not know what to do, ma'am, for he looked about from the top of the chimney, and not a soul could he see stirring, but a few that he could not make mind his screech—the boy within almost stifling too. So he screeched,

and screeched, all he could; and by the greatest chance in life, ma'am, old Mr. Eden was just going down the hill to fetch his morning walk.'

'Aye,' interrupted Mrs. Theresa, 'friend Ephraim is one of your early risers.'

'Well!' said Marianne, impatiently.

'So, ma'am, hearing the screech, he turns and sees the sweep, and the moment he understands the matter——'

'I'm sure he must have taken some time to understand it,' interposed Mrs. Tattle, 'for he's the slowest creature breathing, and the deafest in company. Go on, Christopher. So the sweep did make him hear?'

'So he says, ma'am; and so the old gentleman went in, and pulled the boy out of the chimney, with much ado, ma'am.'

'Bless me!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa, 'but did old Eden go up the chimney himself after the boy, wig and all?'

'Why, ma'am,' said Christopher, with a look of great delight, 'that was all as one, as the very 'dentical words I put to the boy myself, when he telled me his story. But, ma'am, that was what I couldn't get out of him neither, rightly, for he is a churl; the big boy, that was stuck in the chimney, I mean; for when I put the question to him

about the wig, laughing like, he wouldn't take it laughing like at all, but would only make answer to us like a bear, 'He saved my life, that's all I know;' and this over again, ma'am, to all the kitchen round, that cross-questioned him. So, when I finds him so stupid and ill-mannered like (for I offered him a shilling, ma'am, myself, to tell about the wig) but he put it back in a ways that did not become such as he, to no lady's butler, ma'am; whereupon I turns to the slim fellow, and he's smarterer, and more mannerly, ma'am, with a tongue in his head for his betters, but he could not resolve me my question neither, for he was up at the top of the chimney the best part o' the time; and when he came down, Mr. Eden had his wig on, but had his arm all bare and bloody, ma'am.'

'Poor Mr. Eden,' exclaimed Marianne.

'O, miss,' continued the servant, 'and the chimney-sweep himself was so bruised, and must have been killed.'

'Well, well! but he's alive now; go on with your story, Christopher,' said Mrs. T. 'Chimney-sweepers get wedged in chimnies every day, it's part of their trade, and it's a happy thing when they come off with a few bruises. To be sure,' added she, observing

that both Frederick and Marianne looked displeased at this speech, 'to be sure, if one may believe this story, there was some real danger.'

'Real danger! yes, indeed,' said Marianne, 'and I'm sure I think Mr. Eden was very good.'

'Certainly, it was a most commendable action, and quite providential; so I shall take an opportunity of saying, when I tell the story, in all companies; and the boy may thank his kind stars, I'm sure, to the end of his days, for such an escape. But, pray, Christopher,' said she, persisting in her conversation with Christopher, who was now laying the cloth for supper, 'pray which house was it in Paradise-row? where the Eagles or the Miss Ropers lodge, or which?'

'It was at my Lady Battersby's, ma'am.'

'Ha! ha!' cried Mrs. Theresa, 'I thought we should get to the bottom of the affair at last. This is excellent! This will make an admirable story for my Lady Battersby the next time I see her. These quakers are so sly! Old Eden, I know, has long wanted to get himself introduced in that house, and a charming charitable expedient he hit upon! My Lady Battersby will enjoy this of all things.'

CHAPTER III.

'NOW,' continued Mrs. Theresa, turning to Frederick, as soon as the servant had left the room, 'now, Mr. Frederick Montague, I have a favour—such a favour to ask of you—it's a favour which only you can grant; you have such talents, and would do the thing so admirably! and my Lady Battersby would quite adore you for it. She will do me the honour to be here to spend an evening to-morrow. I'm convinced Mr. and Mrs. Montague will find themselves obliged to stay out another day; and I so long to shew you off to her ladyship; and your Doctor Carbuncle, and your Counsellor Puff, and your Miss Croker, and all your charming characters. You must let me introduce you to her ladyship to-morrow evening. Promise me—'

'O, ma'am,' said Frederick, 'I cannot promise you any such thing, indeed. I am much obliged to you; but I cannot come, indeed.'

'Why not, my dear sir? why not? You don't think I mean you should promise, if you are certain your papa and mamma will be home?'

'If they do come home, I will ask them about it,' said Frederick, hesitating; for though he by no means wished to accept of the invitation, he had not yet acquired the necessary power of saying NO, decidedly.

'Ask them!' repeated Mrs. Theresa, 'my dear sir, at your age, must you ask your papa and mamma about such things?'

'Must! no, ma'am,' said Frederick; 'but I said I would; I know I need not, because my father and mother always let me judge for myself about every thing almost.'

'And about this I am sure,' cried Marianne; 'papa and mamma, you know, just as they were going away, said, 'if Mrs. Theresa asks you to come, do as you think best.'

'Well then,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'you know it rests with yourselves, if you may do as you please.'

'To be sure I may, madam,' said Frederick, colouring from that species of emotion, which is justly called false shame, and which often conquers real shame, 'to be sure, ma'am, I may do as I please.'

'Then I may make sure of you,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'for now it would be downright rudeness to tell a lady you won't do as she pleases. Mr. Frederick Montague, I'm sure, is too well bred a young gentleman, to do so impolite, so ungallant a thing!'

The jargon of politeness and gallantry is frequently brought by the silly acquaintance of young people, to confuse their simple morality, and clear good sense. A new and unintelligible system is presented to them, in a language foreign to their understanding, and contradictory to their feelings. They hesitate between new motives and old principles; from the fear of being thought ignorant, they become affected, and from the dread of being thought to be children, act like fools. But all this they feel only when they are in the company of such people as Mrs. Theresa Tattle.

'Ma'am,' Frederick began, 'I don't mean to be rude; but I hope you'll excuse me from coming to drink tea with you tomorrow, because my father and mother are

not acquainted with Lady Battersby, and may be they might not like——'

'Take care, take care,' said Mrs. Theresa, laughing at his perplexity, 'you want to get off from obliging me, and you don't know how. You had very nearly made a most shocking blunder, in putting it all upon poor Lady Battersby. Now you know it's impossible Mr. and Mrs. Montague could have in nature the slightest objection to my introducing you to my Lady Battersby at my own house; for don't you know, that, besides her ladyship's many unexceptionable qualities, which one need not talk of, she is cousin, but once removed, to the Trotters of Lancashire, your mother's great favourites. And there is not a person at the Wells, I'll venture to say, could be of more advantage to your sister Sophy, in the way of partners, when she comes to go to the balls, which it's to be supposed she will some time or other; and as you are so good a brother, that's a thing to be looked to, you know. Besides, as to yourself, there's nothing her ladyship delights in so much as in a good mimic; and she'll quite adore you!'

'But I don't want her to adore me, ma'am,' said Frederick, bluntly; then, correcting himself, added, 'I mean for being a mimic.'

'Why not my love? Between friends can there be any harm in shewing one's talents, you that have such talents to shew? She'll keep your secret, I'll answer for her; and,' added she, 'you needn't be afraid of her criticism; for, between you and I, she's no great critic; so you'll come. Well, thank you, that's settled. How you have made me beg and pray; but you know your own value, I see, as you entertaining people always do. One must ask a wit, like a fine singer, so often. Well, but now for the favour I was going to ask you.'

Frederick looked surprised; for he thought that the favour of his company was what she meant; but she explained herself farther.

'The old quaker who lodges above—old Ephraim Eden—my Lady Battersby and I have so much diversion about him; he is the best character—the oddest creature! If you were but to see him come into the rooms with those stiff skirts, or walking with his eternal sister Birtha, and his everlasting broad-brimmed hat, one knows him a mile off. But then his voice, and way, and all together, if one could get them to the life, they'd be better than any thing on the stage; better even than any thing I've seen to-night;

and I think you'd make a capital quaker for my Lady Battersby; but then the thing is, one can never get to hear the old quiz talk. Now you who have so much invention and cleverness—I have no invention myself, but could not you hit upon some way of getting to see him, so that you might get him by heart? I'm sure you, who are so quick, would only want to see and hear him, for half a minute, to be able to take him off, so as to kill one with laughing. But I have no invention.'

'O, as to the invention,' said Frederick, 'I know an admirable way of doing the thing, if that was all. But then remember, I don't say I will do the thing, for I will not. But I know a way of getting up into his room, and seeing him, without his knowing I was there.'

'O tell it me, you charming, clever creature!'

'But remember, I do not say I will do it.'

'Well, well, let us hear it and you shall do as you please afterwards.'

'Merciful goodness!' exclaimed Mrs. Tattle, 'do my ears deceive me? I declare I looked round, and thought the squeaking chimney-sweeper was in the room.'

'So did I, Frederick, I declare,' cried Marianne, laughing. 'I never heard any thing so like his voice in my life.'

Frederick imitated the squeaking voice of this chimney-sweeper to great perfection. 'Now,' continued he, 'this fellow is just my height; the old quaker, if my face were blackened, and if I were to change clothes with the chimney-sweeper, I'll answer for it, would never know me.'

'O, it's an admirable invention! I give you infinite credit for it!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa. 'It shall, it must be done: I'll ring, and have the fellow up this minute.'

'O, no; do not ring,' said Frederick, stopping her hand, 'I don't mean to do it. You know you promised that I should do as I pleased; I only told you my invention.'

'Well, well, but only let me ring, and ask whether the chimney-sweepers are below; you shall do as you please afterwards.'

'Christopher, shut the door; Christopher,' said she to the servant, who came up when she rang, 'pray are the sweeps gone yet?'

'No, ma'am.'

'But have they been up to old Eden yet?'

'O no, ma'am; nor be not to go till the bell rings; for Miss Birtha, ma'am, was

asleep, laying down, and her brother would n't have her wakened on no account whatsomever; he came down his self to the kitchen to the sweeps though; but wouldn't have, as I heard him say, his sister waked for no account. But Miss Birtha's bell will ring, when she wakens, for the sweeps, ma'am; 'twas she wanted to see the boy as her brother saved, and I suppose sent for 'em to give 'em something charitable, ma'am.'

'Well, never mind your suppositions,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'run down this very minute to the little squeaking chimney-sweep, and send him up to me. Quick, but don't let the other bear come up with him.'

Christopher, who had curiosity as well as his mistress, when he returned with the chimney-sweeper, prolonged his own stay in the room, by sweeping the hearth, throwing down the tongs and shovel, and picking them up again.

'That will do Christopher; Christopher, that will do, I say,' Mrs. Theresa repeated in vain. She was obliged to say, 'Christopher, you may go,' before he would depart.

'Now,' said she to Frederick, 'step in here to the next room, with this candle, and you'll be equipped in an instant. Only just

change clothes with the boy; only just let me see what a charming chimney-sweeper you'd make; you shall do as you please afterwards.'

'Well, I'll only change clothes with him, just to shew you for one minute.'

'But,' said Marianne to Mrs. Theresa, whilst Frederick was changing his clothes, 'I think Frederick is right about——'

'About what, love?'

'I think he is in the right not to go up, though he can do it so easily, to see that gentleman, I mean on purpose to mimic and laugh at him afterwards; I don't think that would be quite right.'

'Why, pray, Miss Marianne?'

'Why, because he is so good natured to his sister. He would not let her be wakened.'

'Dear, it's easy to be good in such little things; and he won't have long to be good to her neither; for I don't think she'll trouble him long in this world any how.'

'What do you mean?' said Marianne.

'That she'll die, child.'

'Die! die with that beautiful colour in her cheeks! How sorry her poor, poor brother will be. But she will not die, I'm sure, for she walks about, and runs up stairs so

lightly! O you must be quite entirely mistaken, I hope.'

'If I'm mistaken, Dr. Panado Cardamum's mistaken too then, that's my comfort. He says, unless the waters work a miracle, she stands a bad chance; and she won't follow my advice, and consult the doctor for her health.'

'He would frighten her to death, perhaps,' said Marianne. 'I hope Frederick won't go up to disturb her.'

'Lud, child, you are turned simpleton all of a sudden, how can your brother disturb her more than the real chimney-sweeper?'

'But I don't think it's right,' persisted Marianne, 'and I shall tell him so.'

'Nay, Miss Marianne, I don't commend you now; young ladies should not be so forward to give opinions and advice to their elder brothers unasked; and Mr. Frederick and I, I presume, must know what's right, as well as Miss Marianne. Hush! here he is! O the capital figure,' cried Mrs. Theresa. 'Bravo! Bravo!' cried she, as Frederick entered in the chimney-sweeper's dress: and as he spoke, saying, 'I'm afraid, please your ladyship, to dirty your ladyship's carpet;' she broke out into immoderate raptures, calling him 'her charming

chimney-sweeper!' and repeating, that she knew before hand the character would do for him.

She instantly rung the bell, in spite of all expostulation—ordered Christopher to send up the other chimney-sweeper—triumphed in observing, that Christopher did not in the least know Frederick, when he came into the room; and offered to lay any wager that the other chimney-sweeper would mistake him for his companion. And so he did; and when Frederick spoke, the voice was so very like, that it was scarcely possible that he should have perceived the difference.

Marianne was diverted by this scene, but she started, when in the midst of it, they heard a bell ring.

'That's the lady's bell, and we must go,' said the blunt chimney-sweeper.

'Go, then, about your business, and here's a shilling for you to drink, my honest fellow. I did not know you were so much bruised when I first saw you—I won't detain you. Go,' said she, pushing Frederick towards the door.

Marianne sprang forward to speak to him; but Mrs. Theresa kept her off; and though Frederick resisted, the lady shut the door

upon him by superior force; and having locked it, there was no retreat.

Mrs. Tattle and Marianne waited impatiently for Frederick's return.

'I hear them,' cried Marianne, 'I hear them coming down stairs.'

They listened again, and all was silent.

At length they heard suddenly a great noise of many steps, and many voices in confusion in the hall.

'Merciful!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa, 'it must be your father and mother come back.'

Marianne ran to unlock the room door, and Mrs. Theresa followed her into the hall.

The hall was rather dark, but under the lamp a crowd of people. All the servants in the house were gathered together.

As Mrs. Theresa approached, the crowd opened in silence, and she beheld in the midst Frederick, blood streaming from his face; his head was held by Christopher, and the chimney-sweeper was holding a bason for him.

'Merciful! Gracious Heaven! what will become of me!' exclaimed Mrs. Theresa. 'Bleeding! good God! he'll bleed to death! Can nobody think of any thing that will stop

blood in a minute? A key, a large key down his back; a key—has nobody a key? Mr. and Mrs. Montague will be here before he is done bleeding. A key! cobwebs! a puff-ball! for mercy's sake! Can nobody think of any thing that will stop blood in a minute! Gracious me! he'll bleed to death, I believe.'

'He'll bleed to death! O my brother!' cried Marianne, catching hold of the words, and terrified, she ran up stairs crying, 'Sophy, O Sophy! come down this minute, or he'll be dead! my brother's bleeding to death. Sophy! Sophy! come down, or he'll be dead!'

'Let go the bason, you,' said Christopher, pulling the bason out of the chimney-sweeper's hand, who had all this time stood in silence, 'you are not fit to hold the bason for a gentleman.'

'Let him hold it,' said Frederick, 'he did not mean to hurt me.'

'That's more than he deserves. I'm certain sure he might have known well enough it was Mr. Frederick all the time, and he'd no business to go to fight—such a one as he, with a gentleman.'

'I did not know he was a gentleman,' said the chimney-sweeper, 'how could I?'

'How could he indeed?' said Frederick, 'he shall hold the bason.'

'Gracious me! I'm glad to hear him speak like himself again, at any rate,' cried Mrs. Theresa. 'Lord bless us! and here comes Miss Sophy too.'

'Sophy!' cried Frederick, 'O Sophy! don't you come—don't look at me; you'll despise me.'

'My brother! where? where?' said Sophy, looking, as she thought, at the two chimney-sweepers.

'It's Frederick,' said Marianne, 'that's my brother.'

'Miss Sophy, don't be alarmed,' Mrs. Theresa began, 'but gracious goodness, I wish Miss Birtha——'

At this instant a female figure in white appeared upon the stairs; she passed swiftly on, whilst every one gave way before her.

'O, Miss Birtha!' cried Mrs. Theresa, catching hold of her gown to stop her, as she came near Frederick, 'O, Miss Eden, your beautiful India muslin! take care of the chimney-sweeper, for heaven's sake.' But she pressed forwards.

'It's my brother; will he die?' cried Marianne, throwing her arms round her,

and looking up as if to a being of a superior order, 'will he bleed to death?'

'No, my love!' answered a sweet voice, 'do not frighten thyself.'

'I've done bleeding,' said Frederick.

'Dear me, Miss Marianne, if you would not make such a rout,' cried Mrs. Tattle—'Miss Birtha, it's nothing but a frolic. You see Mr. Frederick Montague only in a masquerade dress. Nothing in the world but a frolic, ma'am. You see he stops bleeding. I was frightened out of my wits at first; I thought it was his eye, but I see it is only his nose; all's well that ends well. Mr. Frederick, we'll keep your counsel. Pray, ma'am, let us ask no questions, it's only a boyish frolic. Come Mr. Frederick, this way, into my room, and I'll give you a towel and some clean water, and you can get rid of this masquerade dress. Make haste, for fear your father and mother should pop in upon us.'

'Do not be afraid of thy father and mother, they are surely thy best friends,' said a mild voice. It was the voice of an elderly gentleman, who now stood behind Frederick.

O, sir! O, Mr. Eden!' said Frederick, turning to him——

'Don't betray me! for goodness sake, say nothing about me,' whispered Mrs. Tattle.

'I am not thinking about you—let me speak,' cried he, pushing away her hand which stopped his mouth, 'I shall say nothing about you, I promise you,' said Frederick, with a look of contempt.

'No, but for your own sake, my dear sir, your papa and mama! Bless me! is not that Mrs. Montague's carriage?'

'My brother ma'am,' said Sophy, 'is not afraid of my father and mother's coming back. Let him speak—he was going to speak the truth.'

'To be sure, Miss Sophy, I wouldn't hinder him from speaking the truth; but it's not proper, I presume, ma'am, to speak truth at all times, and in all places, and before every body, servants and all. I only wanted, ma'am, to hinder your brother from exposing himself. A hall, I apprehend, is not a proper place for explanations.'

'Here,' said Mr. Eden, opening the door of his room, which was on the opposite side of the hall to Mrs. Tattle's, 'here is a place,' said he to Frederick, 'where thou mayest speak the truth at all times, and before every body.'

'Nay, my room's at Mr. Frederick Montague's service, and my door's open too. This way, pray,' said she, pulling his arm.

But Frederick broke from her, and followed Mr. Eden.

'O, sir, will you forgive me?' cried he.

'Forgive thee! and what have I to forgive?'

'Forgive, brother, without asking what,' said Birtha, smiling.

'He shall know all,' cried Frederick! 'all that concerns myself, I mean. Sir, I disguised myself in this dress; I came up to your room to-night on purpose to see you, without your knowing it, that I might mimic you. The chimney-sweeper, where is he?' said Frederick, looking round, and he ran into the hall to see for him—'may he come in? He may—he is a brave, an honest, good, grateful boy. He never guessed who I was; after we left you, we went down to the kitchen together, and there I, fool that I was, for the pleasure of making Mr. Christopher and the servants laugh, began to mimic you. This boy said, he would not stand by and hear you laughed at; that you had saved his life—that I ought to be ashamed of myself; that you had just given me half a crown: and so you had; but I

went on, and told him I'd knock him down if he said another word. He did, I gave the first blow; we fought, I came to the ground; the servants pulled me up again. They found out, I don't know how, that I was not a chimney-sweeper; the rest you saw. And now can you forgive me, sir?' said Frederick to Mr. Eden, seizing hold of his hand.

'The other hand, friend,' said the quaker, gently withdrawing his right hand, which every body now observed was much swelled, and putting it into his bosom again—'this and welcome,' offering his other hand to Frederick, and shaking his with a smile.

'O that other hand!' said Frederick, 'that was hurt, I remember. How ill I have behaved—extremely ill: but this is a lesson, that I shall never forget as long as I live. I hope for the future I shall behave like a gentleman.'

'And like a man—and like a good man, I am sure thou wilt,' said the good quaker, shaking Frederick's hand affectionately, 'or I am much mistaken, friend, in that black countenance.

'You are not mistaken,' cried Marianne, 'Frederick will never be persuaded again by any body, to do what he does not think

right; and now, brother, you may wash your black countenance.'

Just when Frederick had gotten rid of half his black countenance, a double knock was heard at the door. It was Mr. and Mrs. Montague.

'What will you do now?' whispered Mrs. Theresa to Frederick, as his father and mother came into the room.

'A chimney-sweeper! covered with blood!' exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Montague.

'Father I am Frederick,' said he, stepping forward towards them, as they stood in astonishment.

'Frederick! my son!'

'Yes, mother, I'm not hurt half so much as I deserve; I'll tell you——'

'Nay,' interrupted Birtha, 'let my brother tell the story this time; thou hast told it once, and told it well—no one but my brother could tell it better.'

'A story never tells so well the second time, to be sure,' said Mrs. Theresa, 'but Mr. Eden will certainly make the best of it.'

Without taking any notice of Mrs. Tattle, or her apprehensive looks, Mr. Eden explained all that he knew of the affair in a few words. 'Your son,' continued he, 'will

quickly put off this dirty dress; the dress hath not stained the mind—that is fair and honorable. When he felt himself in the wrong, he said so; nor was he in haste to conceal his adventure from his father; this made me think well of both father and son. I speak plainly, friend, for that is best. But what is become of the other chimney-sweeper? he will want to go home,' said Mr. Eden, turning to Mrs. Theresa.

Without making any reply, she hurried out of the room as fast as possible, and returned in a few moments, with a look of extreme consternation.

'Good heaven! here is a catastrophe, indeed! now indeed, Mr. Frederick, your papa and mamma have reason to be angry. A new suit of clothes! the bare-faced villain! gone! no sign of them in my closet, or any where! The door was locked—he must have gone up the chimney, out upon the leads, and so escaped; but Christopher is after him. I protest, Mrs. Montague, you take it too quietly. The wretch! a new suit of clothes, blue coat and buff waistcoat. I never heard of such a thing! I declare Mr. Montague, you are vastly good now, not to be in a passion,' added Mrs. Theresa.

'Madam,' replied Mr. Montague, with a look of much civil contempt, 'I think the loss of a suit of clothes, and even the disgrace that my son has been brought to this evening, fortunate circumstances in his education. He will, I am persuaded, judge and act for himself more wisely in future; nor will he be tempted to offend against humanity, for the sake of being called, 'The best mimic in the world.'

MADEMOISELLE PANACHE.

PART I.

MRS. TEMPLE had two daughters, Emma and Helen; she had taken a great deal of care of their education, and they were very fond of their mother, and particularly happy whenever she had leisure to converse with them: they used to tell her every thing that they thought and felt; so that she had it in her power early to correct, or rather to teach them to correct any little faults in their disposition, and to rectify those errors of judgment, to which young people, from want of experience, are so liable.

Mrs. Temple lived in the country, and her society was composed of a few intimate friends; she wished, especially during the education of her children, to avoid the numerous inconveniences of what is called an extensive acquaintance. However, as her

children grew older, it was necessary that they should be accustomed to see a variety of characters, and still more necessary that they should learn to judge of them. There was little danger of Emma's being hurt by the first impressions of new faces and new ideas: but Helen, of a more vivacious temper, had not yet acquired her sister's good sense. We must observe, that Helen was a little disposed to be fond of novelty, and sometimes formed a prodigiously high opinion of persons whom she had seen but for a few hours: 'not to admire,' was an art which she had to learn.

When Helen was between eleven and twelve years old, Lady S—— returned from abroad, and came to reside at her country seat, which was very near Mrs. Temple's. The lady had a daughter, Lady Augusta, who was a little older than Helen. One morning a fine coach drove to the door, and Lady S—— and her daughter were announced. We shall not say any thing at present of either of the ladies, except that Helen was much delighted with them, and talked of nothing else to her sister all the rest of the day.

The next morning, as these two sisters were sitting at work in their mother's dressing-room, the following conversation began.

'Sister, do you like pink or blue the best?' said Helen.

'I don't know; blue, I think.'

'O blue to be sure. Mother, which do you like best?'

'Why 'tis a question of such importance; I must have time to deliberate; I am afraid I like pink the best.'

'Pink! dear, that's very odd! But mamma, didn't you think yesterday, that Lady Augusta's sash was a remarkably pretty pale blue?'

'Yes, I thought it was very pretty; but as I have seen a great many such sashes, I did not think it was any thing very remarkable.'

'Well, perhaps it was not remarkably pretty; but you'll allow, ma'am, that it was very well put on.'

'It was put on as other sashes are, as well as I remember.'

'I like Lady Augusta exceedingly, mother.'

'What! because she has a blue sash?'

'No, I'm not quite so silly as that,' said Helen, laughing; 'not because she has a blue sash.'

'Why then did you like her? because it was well put on?'

'O, no, no.'

'Why then?'

'Why! mamma, why do you ask why? I can't tell why. You know one often likes and dislikes people at first without exactly knowing why.'

'One! whom you do mean by one?'

'Myself, and every body.'

'You perhaps, but not every body; for only silly people like and dislike without any reason.'

'But I hope I'm not one of the silly people; I only meant, that I had no thought about it: I dare say, if I were to think about it, I should be able to give you a great many reasons.'

'I shall be contented with one good one, Helen.'

'Well then, ma'am, in the first place, I liked her because she was so good-humoured.'

'You saw her but for one half hour. Are you sure, that she is good-humoured?'

'No, ma'am! but I'm sure she looked very good humoured.'

'That's another affair; however, I acknowledge it is reasonable, to feel disposed to like any one who has a good-humoured countenance, because the temper has, I

believe, a very strong influence upon certain muscles of the face; and, Helen, though you are no great physiognomist, we will take it for granted, that you were not mistaken; now I did not think Lady Augusta had a remarkably good-tempered countenance, but I hope that I am mistaken. Was this your only reason for liking her exceedingly?'

'No, not my only reason; I liked her—because—-because—-indeed, ma'am,' said Helen, growing a little impatient at finding herself unable to arrange her own ideas, 'indeed, ma'am, I don't just remember any thing in particular, but I know I thought her very agreeable altogether.'

'Saying that you think a person very agreeable *altogether*, may be a common mode of expression, but I am obliged to inform you, that it is no reason, nor do I exactly comprehend what it means, unless it means, in other words, that you don't choose to be at the trouble of thinking. I am sadly afraid, Helen, that you must be content at last, to be ranked among the silly ones, who like and dislike without knowing why, hey Helen?'

'O, no indeed, mother,' said Helen, putting down her work.

'My dear, I am sorry to distress you, but what are become of the *great many* good reasons?'

'O, I have them still; but then I'm afraid to tell them, because Emma will laugh at me.'

'No, indeed, I won't laugh,' said Emma, 'besides, if you please, I can go away.'

'No, no, sit still; I will tell them directly. Why, mother, you know, before we saw Lady Augusta, every body told us how pretty, and accomplished, and agreeable she was.'

'Every body! nobody that I remember,' said Emma, 'but Mrs. H. and Miss K.'

'O, indeed, sister, and Lady M. too.'

'Well, and Lady M. that makes three.'

'But are three people every body?'

'No, to be sure,' said Helen, a little disconcerted; 'but you promised not to laugh at me, Emma. However, mother, without joking, I am sure Lady Augusta is very accomplished at least. Do you know, ma'am, she has a French governess? but I forget her name.'

'Never mind her name, it is little to the purpose.'

'O, but I recollect it now; Mademoiselle Panache.'

'Why undoubtedly Lady Augusta's having a French governess, and her name being Mademoiselle Panache, are incontrovertible proofs of the excellence of her education; but I think you said you were sure, that she was very accomplished; what do you mean by accomplished?'

'Why, that she dances extremely well, and that she speaks French and Italian, and that she draws exceedingly well indeed; takes likenesses, mamma! likenesses in miniature, mother!'

'You saw them, I suppose?'

'Saw them! No, I did not see them, but I heard of them.'

'That's a singular method of judging of pictures.'

'But, however, she certainly plays extremely well upon the piano-forte, and understands music perfectly. I have a particular reason for knowing this however.'

'You did not hear her play?'

'No; but I saw an Italian song written in her own hand, and she told me, she set it to music herself.'

'You saw her music, and heard her drawings; excellent proofs! Well, but her dancing?'

'Why, she told me the name of her dancing-master, and it sounded like a foreign name.'

'So, I suppose, he must be a good one,' said Emma, laughing.

'But, seriously, I do believe she is sensible.'

'Well: your cause of belief?'

'Why, I asked her if she had read much history, and she answered '*a little;*' but I saw by her look, she meant '*a great deal.*' Nay, Emma! you are laughing now; I saw you smile.'

'Forgive her, Helen, indeed it was very difficult to help it,' said Mrs. Temple.

'Well mother,' said Helen, 'I believe I have been a little hasty in my judgment, and all my good reasons are reduced to nothing: I dare say all this time Lady Augusta is very ignorant, and very ill-natured.'

'Nay; now you are going into the opposite extreme: it is possible she may have all the accomplishments, and good qualities, which you first imagined her to have: I only meant to shew you, that you had no proofs of them hitherto.'

'But, surely, mother, it would be but good-natured to believe a stranger to be amiable and sensible, when we know

nothing to the contrary ; strangers may be as good as the people we have known all our lives ; so it would be very hard upon them, and very silly in us too, if we were to take it for granted, they were every thing that was bad, merely because they were strangers.'

'You do not yet reason with perfect accuracy, Helen ; is there no difference between thinking people every thing that is good and amiable, and taking it for granted, that they are every thing that is bad?'

'But then, mother, what can one do? To be always doubting and doubting is very disagreeable : and at first, when one knows nothing of a person, how can we judge?'

'There is no necessity that I can perceive, for your judging of people's characters the very instant they come into a room, which I suppose is what you mean by 'at first.' And though it be disagreeable, to be always 'doubting and doubting,' yet it is what we must submit to patiently, Helen, unless we would submit to the consequences of deciding ill ; which, let me assure you, my little daughter, are infinitely more disagreeable.'

'Then,' said Helen, 'I had better doubt and doubt a little longer, mother, about Lady Augusta.'

Here the conversation ended. A few days afterwards Lady Augusta came with her mother, to dine at Mrs. Temple's. For the first hour Helen kept her resolution, and with some difficulty maintained her mind in the painful, philosophic state of doubt; but the second hour Helen thought that it would be unjust to doubt any longer; especially as Lady Augusta had just shewn her a French pocket fan, and at the very same time observed to Emma, that her sister's hair was a true auburn colour.

In the evening, after they had returned from a walk, they went into Mrs. Temple's dressing-room, to look at a certain black japanned cabinet, in which Helen kept some dried specimens of plants, and other curious things. Half the drawers in this cabinet were her's, and the other half her sister's. Now Emma, though she was sufficiently obliging and polite towards her new acquaintance, was by no means enchanted with her; nor did she feel the least disposition, suddenly to contract a friendship with a person she had seen but for a few hours. This reserve, Helen thought, shewed some want of feeling, and seemed determined to make amends for it by the warmth and frankness of her own manners. She opened all the

drawers of the cabinet; and whilst Lady Augusta looked and admired, Helen watched her eye, as Aboulcasem, in the Persian Tales, watched the eye of the stranger, to whom he was displaying his treasures. Helen, it seems, had read the story, which had left a deep impression upon her imagination; and she had long determined, on the first convenient opportunity, to imitate the conduct of the 'generous Persian.' Immediately, therefore, upon observing that any thing struck her guest's fancy, she withdrew it, and secretly set it apart for her, as Aboulcasem set apart the slave, and the cup, and the peacock. At night when Lady Augusta was preparing to depart, Helen slipped out of the room, packed up the things, and as Aboulcasem wrote a scroll with his presents, she thought it necessary to accompany her's with a billet. All this being accomplished with much celerity, and some trepidation, she hurried down stairs, gave her packet to one of the servants, and saw it lodged in Lady S—'s coach.

When the visit was ended, and Helen and Emma had retired to their own room at night, they began to talk instead of going to sleep. Well, sister,' said Helen, 'and what did you give to Lady Augusta?'

'I! nothing.'

'Nothing!' repeated Helen, in a triumphant tone; 'then she will not think you very generous.'

'I do not want her to think me very generous,' said Emma, laughing; 'neither do I think, that giving of presents to strangers is always a proof of generosity.'

'Stangers or no strangers, that makes no difference; for surely a person's giving away any thing that they like themselves, is a pretty certain proof, Emma, of their generosity.'

'Not quite so certain,' replied Emma; 'at least I mean as far as I can judge of my own mind; I know I have sometimes given things away that I liked myself, merely because I was ashamed to refuse; now I should not call that generosity, but weakness; and besides, I think it does make a great deal of difference, Helen, whether you mean to speak of strangers or friends: I am sure, at this instant if there is any thing of mine in that black cabinet, that you wish for, Helen, I'll give it you with the greatest pleasure.'

'And not to Lady Augusta?'

'No; I could not do both; and do you think I would make no distinction between

a person I have lived with and loved for years, and a stranger, whom I know and care very little about?'

Helen was touched by this speech, especially as she entirely believed her sister, for Emma was not one who made sentimental speeches.

A short time after this visit, Mrs. Temple took her two daughters with her, to dine at Lady S—'s. As they happened to go rather earlier than usual, they found nobody in the drawing-room but the French governess, Mademoiselle Panache. Helen, it seems, had conceived a very sublime idea of a French governess, and when she first came into the room, she looked up to Mademoiselle Panache with a mixture of awe and admiration. Mademoiselle was not much troubled with any of that awkward reserve which seems in England sometimes to keep strangers at bay for the first quarter of an hour of their acquaintance; she could not, it is true, speak English very fluently, but this only encreased her desire to speak it; and between two languages she found means, with some difficulty, to express herself. The conversation, after the usual preliminary nothings had been gone over,

turned upon France, and French literature; Mrs. Temple said she was going to purchase some French books for her daughters, and very politely begged to know what authors Mademoiselle would particularly recommend. '*Vat auteurs!* you do me much honour, madame—*vat auteurs!* why *mesdemoiselles*, *there's Telemaque and Belisaire.*'

Helen and Emma had read Telemaque and Belisaire, so Mademoiselle was obliged to think again. '*Attendez!*' cried she, putting up her fore finger in an attitude of recollection. But the result of all her recollection was still '*Belisaire*' and '*Telemaque;*' and an *abbé's* book, whose name she could not remember, though she remembered perfectly well, that the *vork* was published '*l'an mille six cents quatre vingts dix.*'

Helen could scarcely forbear smiling, so much was her awe and admiration of a French governess abated. Mrs. Temple, to relieve mademoiselle from the perplexity of searching for the abbé's name, and to avoid the hazard of going out of her circle of French literature, mentioned Gil Blas; and observed, that, though it was a book universally put into the hands of very young people, she thought mademoiselle judged well in preferring——

'O!' interrupted Mademoiselle, '*Je me trouve bien heureuse*—I am quite happy, madame, to be of your way of *tinking*. I would never go to choose to put Gil Blas into no pupil's of mine's hands, until they were perfectly mistress of *de idiome de la langue*.'

It was not the idiom, but the morality of the book to which Mrs. Temple had alluded; but that, it was very plain, occupied no part of Mademoiselle Panache's attention; her object was solely to teach her pupil French. '*Mais pour Miladi* Augusta,' cried she, '*c'est vraiment un petit prodige!* You, madame, you are a judge. *On le voit bien. You know how much difficile it be to compose French poésie, because of de rhymes, de masculin, feminine, de neutre genre of noun substantive and adjective, all to be consider in spite of de sense in our rhymes. Je ne m'explique pas—mais enfin—de natives demselves very few come to write passably in poésie; except it be your great poets by profession. Cependant, madame, Miladi Augusta, I speak de truth, not one vord of lies, Miladi Augusta write poésie just the same with prose. Véritablement comme un ange! Et puis*,' continued Mademoiselle Panache——

But she was interrupted by the entrance of the 'little angel' and her mother. Lady Augusta wore a rose-coloured sash to-day, and Helen no longer preferred blue to pink. Not long after they were seated, Lady S—— observed that her daughter's face was burned by being opposite to the fire; and, after betraying some symptoms of anxiety, cried, 'Mademoiselle, why will you always let Augusta sit so near the fire? My dear, how can you bear to burn your face so? Do be so good, for my sake, to take a screen.'

'There is no screen in the room, ma'am, I believe,' said the young lady, moving, or seeming to move her chair three quarters of an inch backwards.

'No screen!' said Lady S——, looking round; 'I thought, mademoiselle, your screens were finished.'

'*Oh oui, madame, dey be finish; but I forgot to make dem come down stairs.*'

'I hate embroidered screens,' observed Lady S——, turning away her head; for one is always afraid to use them.'

Mademoiselle immediately rose to fetch one of hers.

'*Ne vous dérangez pas, mademoiselle,*' said Lady S——, carelessly. And whilst

she was out of the room, turning to Mrs. Temple, 'Have you a French governess?' said she, 'I think you told me not.'

'No,' said Mrs. Temple, 'I have no thoughts of any governess for my daughters.'

'Why, indeed, I don't know but you are quite right; for they are sad plagues to have in one's house; besides, I believe too, in general, they are a sad set of people. But what can one do, you know? One must submit to all that; for they tell me there's no other way of securing to one's children a good French pronunciation. How will you manage about that?'

'Helen and Emma,' said Mrs. Temple, 'read and understand French as well as I could wish, and if ever they go to France, I hope they will be able to catch the accent, as I have never suffered them to acquire any fixed bad habits of speaking it.'

'O,' said Lady S——, '*bad habits* are what I dread of all things for Augusta; I assure you I was particularly nice about the choice of a governess for her; so many of these sort of people come over here from Switzerland, or the French provinces, and speak a horrid jargon. It's very difficult to meet with a person you could entirely depend upon.'

'Very difficult indeed,' said Mrs. Temple.

'However,' continued her ladyship, 'I think myself most exceedingly fortunate; I am absolutely certain, that Mademoiselle Panache comes from Paris, and was born and educated there; so I feel quite at ease; and as to the rest,' said she, lowering her voice, but only lowering it sufficiently to fix Lady Augusta's attention—'as to the rest, I shall part with her when my daughter is a year or two older; so you know she can do no great harm. Besides,' said she, speaking louder, 'I really have great confidence in her, and Augusta and she seem to agree vastly well.'

'O yes,' said Lady Augusta, 'Mademoiselle is exceedingly good-natured; I am sure I like her vastly.'

'Well, that's the chief thing: I would work upon a child's sensibility; that's my notion of education,' said Lady S—— to Mrs. Temple, affecting a sweet smile—'take care of the heart at any rate; there I'm sure, at least, I may depend on Mademoiselle Panache, for she is the best creature in the world! I've the highest opinion of her: not that I would trust my own judgment, but she was most exceedingly well recommended to me.'

Madamoiselle Panache came into the room again, just as Lady S—— finished her last sentence; she brought one of her own worked screens in her hand. Helen looked at Lady Augusta, expecting that she would at least have gone to meet her governess; but the young lady never offered to rise from her seat; and when poor Mademoiselle presented the screen to her, she received it with the utmost *nonchalance*, only interrupting her conversation by a slight bow of the head. Helen and Emma looked down, feeling both ashamed and shocked at manners which they could neither think kind nor polite.

However, it was no wonder that the pupil should not be scrupulously respectful towards a governess, whom her mother treated like a waiting-maid.

More carriages now came to the door, and the room was soon filled with company. The young ladies dined at the side-table with Mademoiselle Panache; and during dinner, Emma and Helen quite won her heart. '*Voilà des demoiselles des plus polies!*' she said with emphasis; and it is true that they were particularly careful to treat her with the greatest attention and respect, not only from their general habits of good breeding,

and from a sense of propriety, but from a feeling of pity and generosity: they could not bear to think, that a person should be treated with neglect or insolence, merely because their situation and rank happened to be inferior.

Mademoiselle, pleased with their manners, was particularly officious in entertaining them; and when the rest of the company sat down to cards, she offered to shew them the house, which was large and magnificent.

Helen and Emma, were very glad to be relieved from their seats beside the card-table, and from perpetually hearing of trumps, odd tricks, and honours; so that they eagerly accepted Mademoiselle's proposal.

The last room which they went into was Lady Augusta's apartment, in which her writing-desk, her drawing-box, and her piano-forte stood. It was very elegantly furnished; and at one end was a handsome book-case, which immediately attracted Helen and Emma's attention. Not Lady Augusta's: her attention, the moment she came into the room, was attracted by a hat, which Mademoiselle, had been making up in the morning, and which lay half finished upon the sofa. 'Well, really this is elegant!'

said she; 'certainly, mademoiselle, you have the best taste in the world! Isn't it a beautiful hat?' said she appealing to Helen and Emma.

'O, yes,' replied Helen instantly; for as she was no great judge, she was afraid to hazard her opinion, and thought it safest to acquiesce in Lady Augusta's. Emma, on the contrary, who did not think the hat particularly pretty, and who dared to think for herself, was silent. And certainly it requires no common share of strength of mind, to dare to think for one's self about a hat.

In the mean time Mademoiselle put the finishing stroke to her work; and observing that the colour of the ribbon would become Helen's complexion—'*merveilleusement! Permettez, mademoiselle*,' said she, putting it lightly upon her head—'*qu'elle est charmante! qu'elle est bien comme ça! quite anoder ting! Mademoiselle Helen est charmante!*' cried the governess with enthusiasm; and her pupil echoed her exclamations with equal enthusiasm, till Helen would absolutely have been persuaded that some sudden metamorphosis had taken place in her appearance, if her sister's composure had not happily preserved her in her sober senses. She could not however, help feeling

a sensible diminution of merit and happiness, when the hat was lifted off her head.

'What a very pretty coloured ribbon!' said she.

'That's pistachio colour,' said Lady Augusta.

'Pistachio colour!' repeated Helen, with admiration.

'Pistachio colour,' repeated her sister coolly; 'I did not know that was the name of the colour.'

'*Bon Dieu!*' said mademoiselle, lifting up her hands and eyes to Heaven; '*Bon Dieu! not know de pistachea colour!*'

Emma, neither humbled nor shocked at her own ignorance, simply said to herself, 'Surely it is no crime, not to know *a name*.' But mademoiselle's abhorrent and amazed look produced a very different effect upon Helen's imagination; she felt all the anguish of false shame, that dangerous infirmity of weak minds.

'*Bon!*' said Mademoiselle Panache to herself, observing the impression which she had made: '*Voilá un bon sujet au moins*.' And she proceeded, with more officiousness perhaps than politeness, to reform certain minutiæ in Helen's dress, which were not precisely adjusted according to what she

called *the mode:* she having the misfortune to be possessed of that intolerant spirit which admits but of one mode; a spirit which is common to all persons, who have seen but little of the world, or of good company; and who, consequently, cannot conceive the liberality of sentiment upon all matters of taste and fashion, which distinguishes well-bred and well-educated people.

'*Pardonnez*, Mademoiselle Helen,' said she: '*permettez*'—altering things to her fancy—'*un petit plus—et un petit plus: oui comme ça—comme ça—bien!—bien!—Ah non!—cela est vilain—affreuse! mais tenez, toujours comme ça; ressouvenez vous bien, mademoiselle—ah bon! vous voilá mise á quatres épingles!*'

'*A quatres épingles!*' repeated Helen to herself. 'Surely,' thought Emma, 'that is a vulgar expression; Mademoiselle is not as elegant in her taste for language as for dress.' Indeed, two or three technical expressions, which afterwards escaped from this lady, joined to the prodigious knowledge she displayed of the names, qualities, and value of ribbons, gauzes, feathers, &c. had excited a strong suspicion in Emma's mind, that Mademoiselle Panache herself

might possibly have had the honour to be a milliner.

The following incident sufficiently confirmed her suspicions: whilst Mademoiselle was dressing and undressing Helen, she regularly carried every pin which she took out to her mouth.

Helen did not perceive this manœuvre, it being performed with habitual celerity; but seeing that all the pins were vanished, she first glanced her eye upon the table, and then on the ground, and still not seeing her pins, she felt in her pocket for her pincushion, and presented it—'*J'en ai assez, bien obligée mademoiselle;*' and from some secret receptacle in her mouth, she produced first one pin, then another, till Emma counted seventeen to her utter astonishment; more, certainly, than any mouth could contain but a milliner's.

Unfortunately, however, in Mademoiselle's haste to speak, a pin and an exclamation, contending in her mouth, impeded her utterance, and put her in imminent danger of choking. They all looked frightened. '*Qu'avez vous donc?*' cried she, recovering herself with admirable dexterity, '*Qu'avez vous donc? Ce n'est rien. Ah si vous aviez vue Mademoiselle Alexandre! Ah! dat would*

frighten you indeed! Many de time I see her put one tirty, forty, fifty—aye one hundred, two hundred in her mouth—and she all de time laugh, talk, eat, drink, sleep wid dem; and no harm, nonobstant, never happen Mademoiselle Alexandre.'

'And who is Mademoiselle Alexandre?' said Emma.

'*Eh donc!—fameuse marchande de modes—rue St. Honoré—rivale célèbre de Mademoiselle Baulara.*'

'Yes, I know!' said Lady Augusta, delighted to appear to know the names of two French milliners, without in the least suspecting, that she had the honour to have a third for a governess.

Emma smiled, but was silent. She fortunately possessed a sound discriminating understanding; observing and judging for herself, it was not easy to impose upon her by names and grimaces.

It was remarkable, that Mademoiselle Panache had never once attempted to alter any thing in Emma's dress, and directed very little of her conversation to her; seeming to have an intuitive perception that she could make no impression; and Lady Augusta too treated her with less familiarity, but with far more respect.

'*Dear* Helen,' said Lady Augusta, for she seemed, to use her own expression, to have taken a great fancy to her; 'dear Helen, I hope you are to be at the ball at the races.'

'I don't know,' said Helen; 'I believe my mother intends to be there.'

'*Et vous?*' said Mademoiselle Panache, 'you, to be sure, I hope; your mamma could not be so cruel, as to leave you at home! *une demoiselle faite comme vous!*'

Helen had been quite indifferent about going to the ball, till these words inspired her with a violent desire to go there, or rather with a violent dread of the misfortune and disgrace of being left 'at home.'

We shall, for fear of being tiresome, omit a long conversation, which passed about the dress and necessary preparations for this ball. It is enough to say, that Helen was struck with despair at the idea that her mother probably would not procure for her all the fine things which Lady Augusta had, and which Mademoiselle assured her were absolutely necessary to her being 'presentable.' In particular, her ambition was excited by a splendid watch-chain of her ladyship's, which Lady Augusta assured her 'there was no possibility of *living* without.'

Emma, however, reflecting that she had lived all her life without even wishing for a watch-chain, was inclined to doubt the accuracy of her ladyship's assertion.

In the mean time poor Helen fell into a profound and somewhat painful reverie. She stood with the watch-chain in her hand, ruminating upon the vast, infinite number of things she wanted to complete her happiness—things of which she had never thought before. Indeed, during the short time she had been in the company of Mademoiselle Panache, a new world seemed to have been opened to her imagination: new wants, new wishes, new notions of right and wrong, and a totally new idea of excellence and happiness had taken possession of her mind.

So much mischief may be done by a silly governess in a single quarter of an hour! But we are yet to see more of the genius of Mademoiselle Panache for education. It happened, that, while the young ladies were busily talking together, she had gotten to the other end of the room, and was as busily engaged at a looking-glass, receding and advancing by turns, to decide the exact distance at which rouge was liable to detection. Keeping her eye upon the mirror, she went backwarder, and backwarder, till

unluckily she chanced to set her foot upon Lady Augusta's favourite little dog, who instantly sent forth a piteous yell.

'Oh! my dog! Oh! my dog!' exclaimed Lady Augusta, running to the dog, and taking it into her lap—'*Oh chére Fanfan!* where is it hurt, my poor, dear, sweet, darling little creature?'

'*Chére Fanfan!*' cried Mademoiselle, kneeling down, and kissing the offended paw; '*pardonnez Fanfan!*' and they continued caressing and pitying Fanfan, so as to give Helen a very exalted opinion of their sensibility, and to make her wiser sister doubt of its sincerity.

Longer would Fanfan have been deplored with all the pathos of feminine fondness, had not Mademoiselle suddenly shrieked, and started up. 'What's the matter? what's the matter?' cried they all at once. The affrighted governess pointed to her pupil's sash, exclaiming, '*Regardez! regardez!*' There was a moderate sized spider upon the young lady's sash—'*La voilá! ah la voilá!*' cried she, at an awful distance.

'It is only a spider,' said Emma.

'A spider!' said Lady Augusta, and threw Fanfan from her lap as she rose—'where? where? on my sash?'

'I'll shake it off,' said Helen.

'Oh! shake it, shake it!'—and she shook it herself, till the spider fell to the ground, who seemed to be almost as much frightened as Lady Augusta, and was making his way as fast as possible from the field of battle.

'*Oú est il? oú est il? Le vilain animal!*' cried Mademoiselle, advancing; '*Ah que je l'écraise au moins*,' said she, having her foot prepared.

'Kill it? O, mademoiselle don't kill it,' said Emma, stooping down to save it; 'I'll put it out of the window this instant.'

'Ah! how can you touch it?' said Lady Augusta with disgust, while Emma carried it carefully in her hand; and Helen, whose humanity was still proof against Mademoiselle Panache, ran to open the window. Just as they had got the poor spider out of the reach of its enemies, a sudden gust of wind blew it back again; it fell once more upon the floor.

'O, kill it—kill it, any body—for heaven's sake *do* kill it!' Mademoiselle pressed forward, and crushed the animal to death.

'Is it dead? quite dead?' said her pupil, approaching timidly.

'*Avancez!*' said her governess, laughing; *que craignez vous donc? elle est morte, je vous dis.*'

The young lady looked at the entrails of the spider, and was satisfied.

So much for a lesson on humanity.

It was some time before the effects of this scene were effaced from the minds of either of the sisters; but at length a subject very interesting to Helen was started. Lady Augusta mentioned the little ebony box which had been put into the coach, and Miss Helen's very obliging note.

However, though she affected to be pleased, it was evident, by the haughty carelessness of her manner whilst she returned her thanks, that she was rather offended than obliged by the present.

Helen was surprised and mortified. The times, she perceived, were changed since the days of Aboulcasem.

'I am particularly distressed,' said Lady Augusta, who often assumed the language of a woman, 'I am particularly distressed to rob you of your pretty prints; especially as my uncle has just sent me down a set of Bartolozzi's from town.'

'But I hope, Lady Augusta, you liked the little prints which are cut out. I think

you said you wished for some such things, to put on a work-basket.'

'O, yes; I'm sure I'm exceedingly obliged to you for remembering that; I had quite forgotten it; but I found some beautiful vignettes the other day in our French books, and I shall set about copying them for my basket directly. I'll shew them to you, if you please,' said she, going to the book-case. 'Mademoiselle, do be so good as to reach for me those little books in the morocco binding.

Mademoiselle got upon a stool, and touched several books, one after another, for she could not translate 'morocco binding.'

'Which did you mean?—*Dis—dis—dis, or dat?*' said she.

'No, no—none of those mademoiselle; not in that row. Look just above your hand in the second row from the top.'

'O, no; not in dat row, I hope.'

'Why not there?'

'*O, Miladi Augusta, vous savez bien—ce sont lá les livres défendus*—I dare not touch one—*vous le savez bien, Miladi, votre chére mére*—'

'*Miladi, votre chére mére!*' repeated the young lady, mimicking her governess, 'pooh, nonsense, give me the books.'

'*Eh non—absolument non—croyez moi, mademoiselle, de book is not good. Ce n'est pas comme il faut; it is not fit for young ladies—for nobody to read.*'

'How do you know that so well, mademoiselle?'

'*N'importe*,' said Mademoiselle colouring, '*n'importe—je le sais. But not to talk of dat; you know I cannot disobey Miladi; de row of romans she forbid to be touch, on no account, by nobody but herself in de house. You know dis, Mademoiselle Augusta—so en conscience*,' said she, descending from the stool——

'*En conscience!*' repeated Lady Augusta, with the impatient accent of one not used to be opposed, 'I can't help admiring the tenderness of your conscience, Mademoiselle Panache. 'Now, would you believe it?' continued she, turning to Emma and Helen, 'now would you believe it? Mademoiselle has had the second volume of that very book under her pillow this fortnight; I caught her reading it one morning, and that was what made me so anxious to see it; or else ten to one I never should have thought of the book; so, '*en conscience!*' mademoiselle—'

Mademoiselle coloured furiously.

'*Mais vraiment, Miladi Augusta, vous me moquez en face!*'

The young lady made no reply, but sprang upon the stool, to reach the books for herself; and the governess, deeming it prudent not to endanger her authority by an ineffectual struggle for victory, thought proper to sound a timely retreat.

'*Allons! mesdemoiselles*,' cried she, '*I fancy de tea wait by dis time—descendons;*' and she led the way. Emma instantly followed her.

'Stay a moment for me, Helen, my dear.' Helen hesitated.—

'Then you won't take down the books?' said she.

'Nay, one moment; just let me shew you the vignette.'

'No, no; pray don't; Mademoiselle said you must not.'

'Yes, she said I must not; but you see she went away, that I might; and so I will,' said Lady Augusta, jumping off the stool with the red books in her hand, 'now, look here.'

'O, no; I can't stay indeed!' said Helen, pulling away her hand.

'La! what a child you are!' said Lady Augusta, laughing; 'its mamma shan't be

angry with it, she shan't. La! what harm can there be in looking at a vignette?'

'Why, to be sure there can be no harm in looking at a vignette,' said Helen, submitting from the same species of false shame, which had conquered her understanding before about the pistachio colour.

'Well, look!' said Lady Augusta, opening the book, 'isn't this exceedingly pretty?'

'Exceedingly pretty,' said Helen, scarce seeing it: 'now shall we go down?'

'No, stay; as you think that pretty I can shew you a much prettier.'

'Well, only *one* then.'

But when she had seen that, Lady Augusta still said, 'one other,' and 'one other,' till she had gone through a volume and a half; Helen all the while alternately hesitating and yielding, out of pure weakness and *mauvaise honte.*

The vignettes, in fact, were not extraordinarily beautiful; nor, if they had, would she have taken the least pleasure in seeing them in such a surreptitious manner. She did not, however, see all the difficulties into which this first deviation from proper conduct would lead her. Alas! no one ever can!

Just when they were within three leaves of the end of the last volume, they heard voices upon the stairs.—'Good God! there's my mother! they're coming! what shall we do?' cried Lady Augusta; and though there could be '*no harm in looking at a print*,' yet the colour now forsook her cheek, and she stood the picture of guilt and cowardice. There was not time to put the books up in their places. What was to be done?

'Put them into our pockets,' said Lady Augusta.

'O, no, no! I won't—I can't—what meanness!'

'But you must. I can't get them both into mine,' said Lady Augusta, in great distress. 'Dear, dear Helen, for my sake!' Helen trembled, and let Lady Augusta put the book into her pocket.

'My dear,' said Lady S—, opening the door just as this operation was effected, 'we are come to see your room; will you let us in?'

'O, certainly, madam,' said Lady Augusta, commanding a smile. But Helen's face was covered with so deep a crimson, and she betrayed such evident symptoms of embarrassment, that her mother, who came

up with the rest of the company, could not help taking notice of it.

'Ar'n't you well, Helen, my dear?' said her mother.

Helen attempted no answer.

'Perhaps,' said Lady Augusta, 'it was the grapes after dinner which disagreed with you.'

Helen refused the look of assent which was expected; and at this moment she felt the greatest contempt for Lady Augusta, and terror to see herself led on step by step in deceit.

'My love, indeed you don't look well,' said Lady S—, in a tone of pity.

'*It must be de grapes!*' said Mademoiselle.

'No, indeed,' said Helen, who felt inexpressible shame and anguish, 'no indeed, it is not the grapes;' turning away, and looking up to her mother with tears in her eyes.

She was upon the point of producing the book before all the company; but Lady Augusta pressed her arm, and she forbore; for she thought it would be dishonourable to betray her.

Mrs. Temple did not choose to question her daughter farther at this time, and

relieved her from confusion by turning to something else.

As they went down stairs to tea, Lady Augusta with familiar fondness, took Helen's hand.

'You need not fear,' said Helen withdrawing her hand coldly, 'I shall not betray you Augusta.'

'You'll promise me that?'

'Yes,' said Helen, with a feeling of contempt.

After tea, Lady Augusta was requested to sit down to the piano forte, and favour the company with an Italian song. She sat down, and played and sung with the greatest ease and gaiety imaginable; whilst Helen, incapable of feeling, still more incapable of affecting gaiety, stood beside the harpsichord, her eyes bowed down with '*penetrative shame*.'

'Why do you look so woe-begone?' said Lady Augusta, as she stooped for a music book; 'why don't you look as I do?'

'I can't,' said Helen.

Her Ladyship did not feel the force of this answer; for her own self-approbation could, it seems, be recovered at a very cheap rate; half a dozen strangers listening, with unmeaning smiles and encomiums, to her

execution of one of Clementi's lessons, were sufficient to satisfy her ambition. Nor is this surprising, when all her education had tended to teach her, that what are called accomplishments are superior to every thing else. Her drawings were next to be produced and admired. The table was presently covered with fruit, flowers, landscapes, men's, women's, and children's heads; whilst Mademoiselle was suffered to stand holding a large port-folio, till she was ready to faint; nor was she, perhaps, the only person in company, who was secretly tired of the exhibition.

These eternal exhibitions of accomplishments have of late become private nuisances. Let young women cultivate their tastes or their understandings in any manner, that can afford them agreeable occupation; or, in one word, that can make them happy; if they are wise, they will early make it their object to be permanently happy, and not merely to be admired for a few hours of their existence.

All this time poor Helen could think of nothing but the book, which she had been persuaded to secrete. It grew late in the evening, and Helen grew more and more uneasy at not having any opportunity of

returning it. Lady Augusta was so busy talking and receiving compliments, that it was impossible to catch her eye.

At length Mrs. Temple's carriage was ordered; and now all the company were seated in form, and Helen saw with the greatest distress, that she was farther than ever from her purpose. She once had a mind to call her mother aside, and consult her; but that she could not do, on account of her promise.

The carriage came to the door; and whilst Helen put on her cloak, Mademoiselle assisted her, so that she could not speak to Lady Augusta. At last, when she was taking leave of her, she said, 'Will you let me give you the book?' and half drew it from her pocket.

'O, goodness! not now; I can't take it now.'

'What shall I do with it?'

'Why, take it home, and send it back, directed to *me*—remember—by the first opportunity—when you have done with it.'

'Done with it! I have done with it. Indeed, Lady Augusta, you must let me give it you now.'

'Come, Helen, we are waiting for you, my dear,' said Mrs. Temple; and Helen

was hurried into the carriage with the book still in her pocket. Thus was she brought from one difficulty into another.

Now she had promised her mother never to borrow any book without her knowledge; and certainly she had not the slightest intention to forfeit her word, when she first was persuaded to look at the vignettes. 'Oh,' said she to herself, 'where will all this end? What shall I do now? Why was I so weak as to stay and look at the prints? And why did I fancy I should like Lady Augusta, before I knew any thing of her? Oh, how much I wish I had never seen her!'

Occupied by these thoughts all the way they were going home, Helen, we may imagine, did not appear as cheerful, or as much at ease as usual. Her mother and sister were conversing very agreeably; but if she had been asked when the carriage stopped, she could not have told a single syllable of what they had been saying.

Mrs. Temple perceived that something hung heavy upon her daughter's mind; but, trusting to her long habits of candor and integrity, she was determined to leave her entirely at liberty; she therefore wished her

a good night, without inquiring into the cause of her melancholy.

Helen scarcely knew what it was to lie awake at night; she generally slept soundly from the moment she went to bed till the morning, and then awakened as gay as a lark; but now it was quite otherwise; she lay awake, uneasy and restless, her pillow was wet with her tears, she turned from side to side, but in vain; it was the longest night she ever remembered; she wished a thousand times for morning, but when the morning came she got up with a very heavy heart; all her usual occupations had lost their charms, and what she felt the most painful was, her mother's kind, open, unsuspicious manner. She had never, at least she had never for many years, broken her word; she had long felt the pleasure of integrity, and knew how to estimate its loss.

'And for what?' said Helen to herself, 'have I forfeited this pleasure? For nothing.'

But, besides this, she was totally at a loss to know what step she was next to take; nor could she consult the friends she had always been accustomed to apply to for advice. Two ideas of honour, two incompatible ideas were struggling in her mind. She thought that she should not betray her

companion, and she knew she ought not to deceive her mother. She was fully resolved never to open the book, which she had in her pocket, but yet she was to keep it she knew not how long. Lady Augusta had desired her to send it home; but she did not see how this was to be accomplished, without having recourse to the secret assistance of servants, a species of meanness to which she had never stooped. She thought she saw herself involved in inextricable difficulties. She knew not what to do; she laid her head down upon her arms, and wept bitterly.

Her mother just then came into the room. 'Helen, my dear,' said she without taking any notice of her tears, 'here's a fan, which one of the servants just brought out of the carriage; I find it was left there by accident all night. The man tells me, that Mademoiselle Panache put it into the front pocket, and said it was a present from Lady Augusta to Miss Helen.' It was a splendid French fan.

'Oh,' said Helen, 'I can't take it! I can't take any present from Lady Augusta ——I wish——'

'You wish, perhaps,' said Mrs. Temple, smiling, 'that you had not begun the traffic

of presents; but since you have, it would not be handsome, it would not be proper, to refuse the fan.'

'But I must—I will refuse it,' said Helen. 'Oh, mother! you don't know how unhappy I am!' She paused. 'Didn't you see that something was the matter, madam, when you came up yesterday into Lady Augusta's room?'

'Yes,' said her mother, 'I did; but I did not choose to inquire the cause; I thought if you had wished I should know it, that you would have told it to me. You are now old enough, Helen, to be treated with confidence.'

'No,' said Helen, bursting into tears, 'I am not—indeed I am not. I have—but, oh, mother! the worst of all is, that I don't know whether I should tell you any thing about it or no. I ought not to betray any body; ought I?'

'Certainly not; and as to me, the desire you now shew to be sincere is enough; you are perfectly at liberty: if I can assist to advise you, my dear, I will; but I do not want to force any secret from you: do what you think right and honourable.'

'But I have done what is very dishonourable,' said Helen. 'At least I may tell you

all that concerns myself. I am afraid you will think I have broken my promise,' said she, drawing the book from her pocket, 'I have brought home this book.' She paused, and seemed to wait for her mother's reproaches; but her mother was silent: she did not look angry, but surprised and sorry.

'Is this all you wished to say?'

'All that I *can* say,' replied Helen; 'perhaps if you heard the whole story, you might think me less to blame, but I cannot tell it to you. I hope you will not ask me any more.'

'No,' said her mother, 'that I assure you I will not.'

'And now, mother, will you—and you'll set my heart at ease again—will you tell me what I shall do with the book?'

'That I cannot possibly do; I cannot advise when I don't know the circumstances; I pity you Helen, but I cannot help you; you must judge for yourself.'

Helen, after some deliberation, resolved to write a note to Lady Augusta, and to ask her mother to send it.

Her mother sent it, without looking at the direction.

'Oh, mother! how good you are to me!'

said Helen; 'and now, madam, what shall be my punishment?'

'It will be a very severe punishment, I'm afraid; but it is not in my power to help it; my confidence in you does not depend upon myself; it must always depend upon you.'

'Oh! have I lost your confidence?'

'Not lost, but lessened it,' said her mother. 'I cannot possibly feel the same confidence in you now, that I did yesterday morning; I cannot feel the same dependance upon a person, who has deceived me, as upon one who never had—could you?'

'No, certainly,' said Helen, with a deep sigh.

'Oh!' said she to herself, 'if Lady Augusta knew the pain she has cost me! But I'm sure, however, she'll tell her mother all the affair, when she reads my note.'

Helen's note contained much eloquence, and more simplicity; but as to the effect upon Lady Augusta, she calculated ill. No answer was returned but a few ostensible lines: 'Lady Augusta's compliments, and she was happy to hear Miss Helen T. was better, &c.' and, strange to tell! when they met about three weeks after at a ball in town, Lady Augusta did not think proper to take any notice of Helen or Emma. She looked

as if she had never seen them before, and by a haughty stare, for girls can stare now almost as well as women, cancelled all her former expressions of friendship for her 'dear Helen.' It is to be observed, that she was now in company with two or three young ladies of higher rank, whom she thought more fashionable, and consequently more amiable.

Mrs. Temple was by no means sorry to find this intimacy between Lady Augusta and her daughter dissolved.

'I am sure the next time,' said Helen, 'I'll take care not to like a stranger merely for having a blue sash.'

'But, indeed,' said Emma, 'I do think Mademoiselle Panache, from all I saw of her, is to blame for many of Lady Augusta's defects.'

'For all of them, I'll answer for it,' said Helen; 'I would not have a French governess for the world; Lady S— might well say, they were a sad set of people.'

'That was too general an expression, Helen,' said Mrs. Temple, 'and it is neither wise nor just to judge of any set of people by an individual, whether that individual be good or bad. All French governesses are not like Mademoiselle Panache.'

Helen corrected her expression, and said, 'Well, I mean I would not for the world have such a governess as Mademoiselle Panache!'

[*The Second Part of Mademoiselle Panache is given in Edgeworth's Moral Tales.*]

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.